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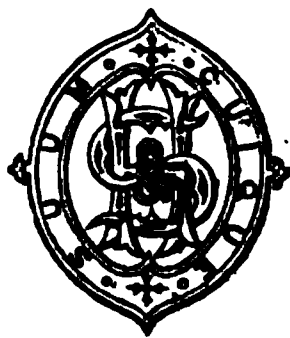


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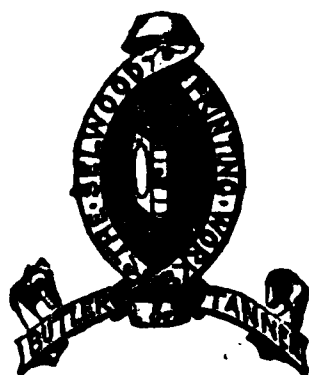
VOLUME III.

“I am for an author that comes at once to the main point.”—*Montaigne*.

“Excursusque breves tentat.”—*Virgil*.



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THE PULPIT ANALYST.

The Divine Slowness.

BY THE REV. ROBERT VAUGHAN, D.D.

“Wait.”—HABAKKUK ii. 8.

THIS single word is not chosen as the guide of our present thought from any fondness for the unusual. More words added to it would limit its application, and render it less suitable to my object. This word is the one word which the Divine wisdom often seems to utter, in rebuke of human impatience. God is never in haste. It is otherwise with man. The Divine proceedings are slow—everywhere slow; while man is eager, hurried, and impatient—everywhere so. In holy Scripture men are often counselled to wait; to wait upon God, to wait for God: language which supposes delay and the need of patience. This language recurs so frequently as to indicate that power to be still, and to wait for the set time of the Divine action, is a habit of soul not common, and of high value where possessed. In the verse from which we select the word “wait,” the prophet is required to show himself capable of obedience in this respect. “The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, *wait* for it.”

In this discourse, some attempt will be made to show that our experience in this respect, in connection with religious life, is such as a study of the Divine conduct in the broadest view of it should lead us to expect. Nature, providence, and grace, are all media through which God reveals Himself to man; and it will be found that in all these manifestations there is consistency, harmony—the same God. This is a great fact: a fact full of light, such as should contribute to guide us safely through many a season of darkness.

I. 1. *The history of the earth* is illustrative of the principle now suggested. Concerning the process by which the heavens became peopled with the brilliancies we now see there, we know nothing. But we have some knowledge of the changes through which this earth had to pass before it became a fitting habitation for man. Geologists, no doubt, do sometimes become a little romantic in their speculations, and leap to conclusions without waiting for sufficient premises to warrant them. But intelligent, sober, Christian men are agreed in regarding the layers of material encompassing our globe as bearing evidence of an antiquity in comparison with which the date of man's appearance on the earth is of yesterday. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." But we are not told how far back that beginning was, compared with the changes of those six days, or intervals, which were to bring the earth into the state in which man found it. In the solitude of those far off ages progressive change gave existence to progressive life—the lives of plants and of animals. We were not present when the mysterious forces from below burst through the crust of our planet, and determined, accord-

ing to the Divine forethought, where the sea should flow, and where the hills should rise. We did not witness the growth of the gigantic vegetation through which monster animals, now extinct, roamed in search of prey. During those long eras the Eternal was here alone. Of beings conscious of His own being none would seem to have been with Him. Man is to come; but for him there is to be long waiting. The Creator is from everlasting. Eternity is His. He may well be slow. Long, very long, everything here must have seemed to be crude, futile, and meaningless; but so the Infinite could wait, so He has waited often since. And He would have men regard the operation of His hands, so that they also may know how to wait. There is something Divine in being able so to do.

2. There is something in *the movement of the seasons* tending to remind us of this great law. The changes of day and night, how slow, how gradual, how imperceptible! How gentle is the coming of the light! How silently and slowly does it give place to the darkness! These might have come with suddenness, as if from a hurried hand; but they do not. There is a stateliness in the transition from the one to the other, and it is as noiseless as it is gradual. It is as if the will of a great King were being done, and by powers which none can venture to resist. So it is with the winter, as it retires before the spring-time; and with spring, as it is succeeded by the summer and the autumn. Well might this circle of change be compared to a mystic dance, so gracefully do the figures move, blending their colours together as in a garland. We feel that there is an Intelligence which has said that it shall be so, and that to that Mind there

is a majesty in slowness. Move on then, day and night, dark winter, joyous spring, beautiful summer, and rich autumn; and let me gaze upon you as you move, as on a procession in honour of the Great King. I hear you whisper as you pass, "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain: be ye also patient."* Yes, there is greatness in patience. The wise know how to wait.

3. There is something in *the history of all life*, adapted to convey the same lesson. Life, whether in plants or animals, is everywhere a growth; and all growth is silent, gradual, so gradual as not to be perceived. All this is rooted in mystery. Everywhere life grows up, man knoweth not how. It gives the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear; but these stages cannot be marked, they melt one into the other. So it is with animal life. Once begun, its course is a ceaseless onwardness towards the perfection proper to it. The impulse whence this comes is a secret hid from man; but he knows that it is such as to ensure that in these transitions there shall be nothing hurried or abrupt, that the end shall come with the steadiness and certainty of law. So the flowers of the field, and the smallest creatures in the air, lift our thoughts to the same agency, an agency that is seen to work after the same manner, whether shaping a world or scattering gold dust over an insect's wing.

Individual life in man, in the sense of education or development, is in harmony with all that has gone before. Instinct soon fills up the narrow limit assigned to it; it

* James v. 7-8,

becomes promptly all that it can be. It is not so with human intelligence. There are minds which may be said to grow continuously to the extent of threescore years and ten. But the apprehensions of childhood and youth, how slowly do they become those of manhood; and the acquisitions of manhood, how slowly are they made! Scholarship, science, art—what need to speak of the protracted toil by which eminence in such pursuits is realized! The end sought may be gained; but it has been through long waiting.

But the truth we are illustrating is seen conspicuously in the *history of national life*. If the education of an individual be so slow, what marvel if the education of a people should be very slow! Human life soon runs its course; but nations live on through a chain of centuries. It has taken all the labour, all the self-sacrifice, all the sad experiences of nearly two thousand years to bring this country out of its primitive state of barbarism into its present state of comparative civilization. Most nations have passed through this process, and it has always been thus protracted and costly. We shrink from the retrospect of so much labour and sorrow, of so many battle fields, so many wretched prison cells, and so many blood-stained scaffolds, as the price to be paid if nations once rude and enslaved are to become enlightened and free. But such is the clear law of providence—a law with which the Deist has to deal in common with the Christian.

II. So far we see, from facts in nature and providence, that it behoves us to guard against impatience in judging the ways of God, and to know how to wait. Religion, revealed religion, includes much in harmony with those facts. It is, moreover, in these phases of religion that we

find some of the aspects of it which are often especially perplexing to Christians.

1. We see a fact of this nature in *the long interval which was to pass between the promise of a Saviour and His advent.*

Sin enters the world. Its disastrous effects soon become visible. The first-born of man gives fearful evidence of its power. Cain becomes a murderer. Nature and man show many signs of the triumph of evil, and seem to prognosticate many more. But a Deliverer is promised. The Seed of the woman shall come, and shall bruise the serpent's head. Had this course of things been entrusted to our hands, we should surely have been eager, in haste, to further the coming of the Redeemer and the overthrow of the Evil One. But the Divine Mind does not evince this eagerness, this haste. Four thousand years pass, and the Promised One does not come. True, the Infinite speaks from heaven by voices and by messengers. He inspires prophets to reiterate His solemn pledge. He originates institutions to be shadows of the great things to come. But the Church has to wait through all those centuries.

Now in the history of the earth, in the slowness of the changes through which it was to pass before it came to be what it was to be, we see enough to prevent our being greatly surprised by such a fact. The silent slowness characterizing the evolutions of nature and providence, and especially everything relating to the progress of man, might well suggest that the work of redemption, like the work of creation, would have its stages—its long epochs, through which, if we may so speak, layer would come upon layer, and process upon process, until this spiritual

creation should attain to its destined maturity. The moral regeneration of a world must be a work embracing the exercise of higher attributes than the natural creation of it, and we need not marvel if in its processes it should be even more protracted. What was to be gained by this delay we can know only in part. Our world is manifestly a chosen theatre for the solution of many grave questions concerning good and evil. Strange to say, it is a world in which sinful beings are to become religious beings, and are to come under influences which shall do more than restore their nature to the perfection it has lost. This great fact embraces many minor facts, all of which have their special significance; and among these facts this delay of the advent is one.

It may be a fact that an intelligence once estranged from the knowledge of God, left to itself, will never regain that knowledge. This might have been affirmed by Him who alone could be competent to have made such an affirmation. But even His word, however explicit, would not have settled this truth as it has been settled by experiment in the history of those forty centuries which preceded the appearance of the Saviour. That truth is no longer an abstraction depending on assertion; it is a demonstration made clear by experience. In those times we see the true Age of Reason—the age in which the intelligence of our race was left to give evidence as to what it could do in this direction. They were times, as Paul boldly says, which God winked at, seemed not to see, but waited His time concerning them, well knowing what the end would be. What could be done by the natural instincts of the rude or the partially cultivated; and what could be done by the most favourable forms of civilization

that human intelligence could realize—was done; and we know the result. From these sources come all monstrous things, which men could still describe as being religious; and even the wisest, while eschewing such follies in their heart, if not with their voice, seemed to have reached their ultimate point in such inquiries when constrained to rear their altar to the Unknown God.

It is with knowledge as it is with goodness: the creature may discard, the Creator only can restore. Free agents are free to effect their own ruin; and the Infinite is free to reclaim them, or to leave them to be filled with the fruit of their own ways. In the case of humanity the compassionate course has been taken. But men are to be saved from darkness and sin through a process which shall demonstrate that God only could have saved them from the one or the other. Men are to learn to confide in their Maker, but not until experience has convinced them that in Him only is their help. "It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God (was left to show that it did not know him), it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*

2. So when the Saviour did come, *the manner of His coming* was not such as the thoughts of men would have anticipated. It must be confessed too that there were preliminaries to that event which might seem to warrant

* 1 Cor. i. 19-21.

the expectation that its coming would be marked by some signal and sensible manifestation of the Divine power. Prophecy had depicted the advent in glowing colours; the Church had given it in shadow in the pomp and splendour of its ritual; and the great kingdoms of the world had been made to take their course, so as to be tributary to the coming of this special kingdom. But men generally did not see these things thus, and were far enough from recognising the seeds of a great change in events which did not take with them any show of outward greatness.

The kingdom of God was to come without observation.* It was to begin with small beginnings. Its Founder was to be to many as a root out of a dry ground, as one without form or comeliness.† To find the parents of the promised Deliverer of the race you have to go to a scene in humble life. To find His birthplace you are led to a manger. His early years have a veil over them. He was much esteemed by His kinsmen and neighbours, and that is nearly all we know concerning Him in those days. When He comes abroad on His great errand, He is homeless and poor. The men He attaches to Himself, the men in whom He confides the most, and employs the most, are from the rank of fishermen. So it is through His life. He seeks not the great; they are left to seek Him. To the end, He has His place apart from the wealth and power to which men have ever been ready to do homage. Even with regard to His spiritual mission, the results are limited, unimposing, by no means such as man's forethought

* Luke xvii. 20.

† Isa. liii.

would have imagined as to be attendant on His course. Sceptics have stumbled at these facts. That the world should be governed by influences coming from so low a source, has been offensive to human pride in all its forms.

But these facts are in harmony with the Divine conduct as known elsewhere. It is not the manner of the Almighty to cause great things to become great at once. It is His pleasure that they should grow out of small things, and that they should do so by slow degrees. Atoms contribute to the formation of worlds. Substances change, and become what they are destined to be, in the process of ages. Life begins in its simplest form, and it attains to higher forms only gradually and long after. So it is with human life—individual and social life. We know what the philosopher is ; we hardly care to know what he once was. Rome came in time to rule the world ; but the walls of the eternal city grew out of the poor earth fence set up by Romulus. God's ways admonish us not to despair of the day of small things, but to remember that under His rule the small is everywhere made to be as parent to the great. Our Lord revealed Himself even to His disciples gradually, slowly, imperfectly. If the Church which is to fill the world had its beginning in the hut of a fisherman, or in the upper room in Jerusalem, this is only in accordance with the Divine law of things. The great forces of nature all move thus, without noise, without haste, so secretly that we never know their beginnings, and so slowly that we can never see their motion, though we know that they are moving.

3. Nor is it without mystery to many minds that the *history of revealed religion since the Advent* should have

been such as it has been. This truth, so long in being fully disclosed to man, having at length come, and everything needful to make the man of God perfect being ours, we might have anticipated that the doctrine of Christ would be retained in its purity, and that its subduing power would soon be everywhere felt. But on reflection, we find analogy suggesting that this was by no means probable. No truth the world had ever possessed had been thus proof against corruption. No good that had ever come to man had been exempt from antagonism, or from the danger of suffering in the conflict awaiting it. Had this uniform law been suspended in favour of the Gospel, the suspension would have been a continued miracle, and would not have been in harmony with the principle of the Divine government, which does not overpower the human will but always leaves unbelief possible to those who are disposed to surrender themselves to it.

No doubt, it is something appalling that this corruption of revealed truth should have appeared so early, should have diffused itself so widely, should have presented itself in the form in which it is ultimately known to us in Church history, and should have endured in that form so long. But in this fact we see confirmation, only too abundant, of the doctrine of human depravity, a root doctrine of revelation, giving meaning to everything distinctive of the Gospel. It is clear that the history of this world was designed to be to a large extent a history of evil, and of evil as developed under many conditions and in many forms. We see something of the nature of sin in all that it does ; but we see what is in it laid bare eminently in its resistance to the highest good. We see

here what a rebel nature may become, even when an amnesty is proclaimed, and overtures of reconciliation, characterized by an infinite generosity, are made. Fallen angels may be *capable* of sinning after this manner, but they have not done so. The alternative of receiving or rejecting such a message has not fallen to them. We now see the feeling with which men may reject the Gospel. We see also that they may corrupt it with a depraved subtilty, and a wantonness of perversion, that would be incredible did it not come before us in the shape of fact and history. It is here, beyond anywhere, that we may read the truth of the inspired words, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."*

If the epoch before the coming of Christ might be expected to prepare us for receiving Him as a teacher, surely what has happened since might well prepare us to receive the Holy Spirit as a purifier, as able to give the preparation of the heart needful to the acceptance of such teaching. The mysteries of evil, who can solve them? The depths of Satan, who can sound them? The might of wickedness, who can subdue it? God only is equal to such things. Out of all the evolutions of error, out of all the devices of evil, He will educe lessons for the future which shall cause His universe to be upon the whole the wiser and the better for all that has happened. But for this we must wait. Often we see good come out of evil. In the end we shall see that all things have been regulated towards such an issue. "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

* Jer. xvii. 9.

4. If we descend from the general life of the Church to the *spiritual history of the individual believer*, we may find much there to remind us that the experience of the Church at large, and of the Christian taken separately, are regulated by the same Intelligence.

In our tendency towards haste we naturally wish to see the world converted soon, very soon. So when we enter on the Christian life, we covet that it should be matured speedily. But it does not so mature. We unlearn the evil slowly; we learn the good still more slowly. Infirmities, which we had hoped would soon be subdued, are not to be so overcome. Vanquished to-day, they seem to return to the field to-morrow. The new and better habit of the soul does not settle and ripen as we had fondly expected. The sin most easily besetting us returns, it may be like an old associate offended and exasperated, from being resisted, spurned, commanded to be gone; and we even fall under it, as Peter did, and as many have done. All this is very humiliating and very painful.

But, as the good in the Church is to be tasked and strengthened by being exposed to the evil in the world, so the better principles and tendencies of the Christian are to become more rooted and powerful by means of this personal conflict. The history of the world might have been shortened, and the good in it might have triumphed over the evil more speedily; but in that case the lesson supplied by the history of its evil might not have been so weighty, or so enduring, as it is now likely to be. So with the Christian: this conflict between flesh and spirit in his case might have been less protracted, less alternating, less painful; but the character derived from it in relation to good and evil might have been

much less complete, and less fruitful of good in the world where there is no conflict, and where the "unseen and eternal" has its complexion as the result of our experiences while familiar with the "seen" and the "temporal." Assuredly, the deeper our experience of what evil is, and of what it entails, the deeper must be our love and gratitude to Him who delivers us from it. So it comes to pass that life in the soul, in common with life everywhere, is a growth, and grows slowly, imperceptibly. The morning light shines steadily onward until day is perfected; so is it with the path of the just. But here, as everywhere, we are schooled to—wait.

5. So is it with *the events which make up the story of a life*. The meaning of some of these we may see at once; we feel that we need the sort of discipline they bring with them; we pray with the devout ancient, "Show me wherefore thou contendest with me," and the wherefore is not allowed to remain a secret. Paul's thorn in the flesh was an experience of this nature—painful in many ways, but declared to be salutary for his inner and higher life.

But in most instances of this kind we have to wait, it may be to wait long, before we see the Divine purpose in the things which befall us. The way is "dark" and "crooked;" and though the darkness is to be made light, and the crooked straight, it will not be without delay, without putting our patience to the exercise of waiting. So Joseph was to wait, until he could look back from his place of power in Egypt on the events which were to conduce to that elevation. He then knew, but not before, why he had been sold as a slave, why he was to be cast into prison as a culprit, and why one of his severest

afflictions was to come from one of his purest actions. Similar was the experience of Jacob, when the old man descended into Egypt, and in the embrace of Joseph might have said, "This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found." All men who have had some experience in life see events in the past, deeply deplored at the time, which they have come to see as events that were kindly regulated so as to save them from much evil, and to open the way to much good. The evil precluded, moreover, may have been something much more grave than any worldly disappointment, and the good so gained may have been something much more precious than any measure of worldly success. Such experience should check impatience, should teach us how to—wait.

But with regard to much in our history, we are expected to wait for the revelations of the world to come. God explains so much in this world as to make it reasonable to believe that there is nothing obscure which He may not be found to explain in the next. The fact that there is so much in the present needing explanation in the future, is a fact pointing strongly to the certainty of that future. So the mysteries which have ceased to be such combine with the mysteries which still remain, to give emphasis to the admonition conveyed by the word—"wait."

It scarcely need be said that the waiting intended is not mere passiveness: it is waiting in the discharge of duty, not in the neglect of it; it is to be as those who wait for the bridegroom, not in sleep, but with loins girt about and lamps burning.

Misread Passages of Scripture.

BY THE REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. I.

“My kingdom is not of this world.”—JOHN xviii. 36.

PERHAPS there is no passage of Scripture more constantly misunderstood than these simple words; and certainly there is no misunderstanding of Scripture which ^{has} exercised a more detrimental influence on the life and development of the Church. The whole passage contains the very marrow of the doctrine of Christ concerning His kingdom. It is the basis of its constitution. To this, its subjects have rightly looked in all ages for instruction as to its fundamental spirit, principles, and aims. Words more solemn, more pregnant, were never spoken in this world, in this universe, than these. They were spoken at the very crisis of universal destinies. They form the dividing line between the two eternities. From eternity all things had been working towards that hour—the consummation of the incarnation; and to eternity the influence of that hour would go forth, remoulding, regenerating all the worlds. Beyond any words that have ever been spoken, these words are worthy of intense and reverent attention. They are the words with which the Son of God passed on to the cross, that He might pass up to the throne.

The two kings stood there in presence. The representative of the king of this world, who wielded all its force and guided all its movements, the man who had but to nod and the whole civilized world trembled and obeyed; and a King, the elements of whose kingship few could discern, who wielded a strange power and produced a deep impression that He had a right to rule over men, but who wore no signs of royalty and laid no

claim to the possession of this world's thrones. Nay, a kingdom had been forced on Him, and He escaped as from a deadly danger from the homage of His subjects, while He spake to them such searching spiritual words that they conceived a great dread of His kingly commands and claims. He bade them begin to rule themselves when they were dreaming of a splendid rule over the Gentiles; and He turned inwards on the inner obliquity, foulness and deformity those eyes which were watching eagerly for the signs of an approaching advent of a glorious, celestial imperator to the world. Jesus looked on Pilate's kingship, and fathomed it perfectly. He knew from whence the power sprang, and by what springs it was fed, which seated Pilate's master on the world's imperial throne. Pilate found the royalty of Jesus unfathomable; none of his worldly experiences helped him to understand it. Art Thou a king then, poor, worn, tear-stained Outcast, forsaken of every subject, of every friend, in the hour of Thy bitter need? And yet the nascent smile of scorn was checked by something which cast a spell even on that worn-out profligate's heart. That lonely wasted Man there had that about Him which made the representative of the world's master afraid. It seemed mere idle talk to a man like Pilate: "a kingdom not of this world;" "witnessing to truth;" "disciples of the truth:" it was all childish to the trained intellect of this experienced ruler; and yet there seemed to be some power beyond the grasp of his intellect, which something within him recognised, and which might create and rule a kingdom after a fashion which till then had never even crossed his dreams. But to him the mystery remained insoluble. He wrote a title to which his instinct gave a reality that his intellect denied, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS." And here in this passage we have the Lord's own declaration of the constitution and aims of His kingdom; the kingdom which, from that hour, has been the ruling element in the history of this world, and, as we learn from the Apocalypse, of all the worlds of the

great universe of God. And men persistently misread it as they misread Him, and employ His words as they employed His works, to frustrate the purpose for which He entered into the world.

Let us see how the misunderstanding of these words arose.

“My kingdom is not of this world”: literally “not from,” originally “out of” this world. A clear understanding of the full force of this will give us the clue to the interpretation of our Lord’s words. There is an old sense of the preposition “of,” which closely corresponds with the full sense of the word employed in the Greek, expressing “out of,” “springing from.” But “of,” like other words and other things, in the course of time has got weakened by the wear and tear of life; and the sense “belonging to,” “connected with,” is its natural suggestion to modern ears; whereby the sense of our Lord’s words has been grievously weakened too. Did the Lord mean to say, “My kingdom has nothing to do with the institutions and arrangements of the worldly life of men: you need not fear any rivalry, delegate of Cæsar; My kingdom is in a quite different sphere, and will keep there, without touching yours: it only has to do with men as spiritual beings, with a view to their final destiny in the eternal state: keep to your secular province, and we shall never cross or clash: the two spheres are quite separate, and nothing but mischief can come of their commerce: I leave you to rule; leave Me to teach, unfettered by conditions; for I aim at no influence on earth, My one object is to persuade men to live a life separate from this world, as much detached as possible from its interests and pursuits, that they may enter into My heavenly kingdom when death releases them, and where the sphere will be all My own”? Was this His meaning? or did He mean to say, “My kingdom is not out of this world; it comes down into this world from on high: this world is, like man, made of the dust of the earth, ‘of the earth, earthy,’ except some spirit breathe into it from the higher world—then it lives:

My kingdom comes to the kingdoms of this world, the interests, aims, pursuits, and common life of men, like this breath of Divine inspiration : without it they all languish and must perish ; with it they live : it is a descent of heavenly truth, heavenly love, heavenly life, into the sphere of the earthly, to make it live anew ; the earth languishes for My kingdom, for without Me it dies : leave Me free to fulfil My mission, not because this world is nothing to Me, and My kingdom will not trouble itself with its affairs, but because My truth, My life, My love are needful to the life of this world as vital air to the body ; because all business, all domestic life, all friendship, all society, all government, all thought, all art, all learning are waiting, are panting, for the living baptism which I bring. I am not of the world, My kingdom is not of the world, in the springs of its influence ; it is essentially of heaven, and from heaven : but it seeks the world as the sphere of its influence, the field of its conquest, the realm of its rule. With yearning desire, eagerly as man yearns for fellowship, a friend for the brother of his spirit, the bridegroom for the bride, I seek and claim this world as My own " ?

Here are the two ideas of the meaning of these words of our Lord set fairly against each other. The number of those who would deliberately adopt and justify the former is happily growing less year by year. Were we caring only for formal misunderstandings of important passages of Scripture in these discourses, it would be hardly worth while to discuss seriously a perversion which is vanishing with the changed aspects of the times. But the spirit, the savour of an error continues long to work after it has been formally exploded ; and we discuss this passage in this present discourse under the strong conviction that the false view which we have described above continues to tincture very deeply our theology, our preaching, and our social ideas and habits, even in those who would utterly repudiate the formal idea of the Lord's kingdom on which it rests.

Some of the results of this misconception of the true nature of the kingdom have been as follow :—

1. The idea has been widely entertained that the aim of the Lord has been, not to save the world, but to save a chosen few out of the world, leaving calmly the great mass to go to wreck. The favourite notion has been that the Lord's disciples have been in all ages, and still will be, an isolated band, like Israel in Egypt; hating the world around them, hated by it, and waiting only the happy opportunity, the hour of deliverance, to pass out of it triumphant, and leave it to perish by the strokes of the Lord's avenging hand. This idea, that the Church is a little band of chosen ones in the midst of a hostile and reprobate world, is a very favourite one with the disciples in all ages; and it is nourished by the tone in which the apostles wrote and spoke to the few poor men and women who were to begin the work of restoration, and who needed to be upborne against tremendous pressure by the assurance of the special and personal intervention of the God of heaven on behalf of the little company whom He loved. They needed a strong support against a world which was bent on destroying them as it had destroyed their Lord; and so the apostle wrote, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." That the disciples have been the few in all ages is alas only too palpable to those whose sight pierces no farther than Elijah's, and who cannot fathom the secret things which are unveiled to the eye of God. But it is a dark heresy to believe that the Lord meant that His own should be the few in all ages, and that the rescue of an election from the impending ruin can satisfy the heart of Him who cried, as the hour of His anguish

drew nigh, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

2. Closely associated with this is the notion that all which belongs to the earthly life of men has a certain taint of evil upon it, is corrupt and corrupting in its very nature; so that if a disciple touches it, he must touch it like pitch, cautiously, and expect contamination with all his care. That if he must enter into the world's activities, buy, sell, and get gain, marry and give in marriage, rule households and take part in the government of states, he must do it under protest and under the spur of a sharp necessity, and is bound to long anxiously for the time when the need of all this will be over, and he will be free to meditate on Divine things and to praise through eternity. If Christ's kingdom be not of this world, he argues, then all which is of this world, politics, literature, art, society, trade cannot be of Christ's kingdom; and His subjects, hampered by these evil cares for a time, must be ever looking forward eagerly to the day when they will be freed from them for ever. And this is the meaning which is constantly veiled under the phrase, "the coming of the Lord Jesus," and expressed in the prayer, "Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

3. Then further there is the notion that it is only in a very partial sense that we can talk of Christ's kingdom here, that it belongs essentially to the future and eternal state, and can only be fully comprehended by him who can separate it in thought from all the blemishes and accidents of time, and behold it, pure from the defilement and degradation of the earthly (that is the human) in this world, in its glorious Divine form in eternity.

And surely there is a great truth here. The perfect image of it, as Plato said of the polity of which he dreamed, abides only in the heavens; and we need to refresh both courage and hope, when we see the blots and fractures of the kingdom here, by contemplating the pure form of it which abides in the heavens with God. But dreams and contemplations will never bring it down

from the heavens: it is here, or nowhere. It is this earthly image which is to be translated into that heavenly likeness; and if we would be near to and like the King, we must follow Him into the very heart of the world's business and throngs, not that we may seek His chosen there and rescue them from the world, but that we may rescue the world from all that makes it other than Christ's kingdom, by driving out of it "everything that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie," and thus purify its atmosphere, cleanse the ducts and channels of its life, invigorate its energy, and consecrate its activity, till it grows like its ideal in heaven.

And what has been the history of the kingdom? Since the first hour of its establishment, perpetual intervention in and action upon the worldly affairs of men. It is literally true that Dean Milman's history of Latin Christianity is the completest history of the Western European world during the middle ages, extant in our language. And why? Because during the middle ages, and until now, the Church has been the backbone of human society. All man's dearest interests and hopes have gathered around the kingdom; over its destinies, and under its banners, all man's deadliest battles have been fought. "Yes!" it may be answered; "but this is just the corruption of the kingdom; because it mixed itself with worldly affairs, and suffered worldly men to administer it, it became the centre and pivot of all the movements of human society." But this state of things was at any rate the confession that the men of this world could not get on without the kingdom, that when it was once revealed it inevitably tended to gather around itself all the vital activity of the world. Since Christ appeared, men have felt everywhere that they must place themselves and their concerns in some kind of vital relation to the Church. And this has been the key to the public life of Christendom; in fact it has made Christendom in opposition to heathendom, as the province of all the most cultivated and progressive races of man-

kind. The forms of relation which men created were no doubt worldly enough ; but the sense that they needed the relation, and must find it to live out a true man's life, was not worldly, but true, noble, and Divine. The Church, from the very hour of the ascension of its Head, began to act on human society as incomparably the most powerful influence extant in the world. It literally re-made society from the very foundations. Far from contenting itself with mastering the will of individual subjects, and wooing them away from the pursuits and interests of the world around them, it entered the homes of men, and cast out the harpy passions which had befouled them ; it gave marriage new sacredness, parents new authority and new responsibility, and children new grounds of obedience to their sires. It entered the market, and established just weights and balances, honest word, and loyal trust. Theft could be no virtue, and lying no graceful accomplishment, where it established its reign. It entered states, and changed tyrants into kings, serfs into subjects, slaves into freemen, nobles into guardians, pastors, and captains of industry to the poor. That very Rome which doomed the King to a malefactor's death, it entered as a conqueror, and it broke that proud empire to fragments. The time came when Rome could live no longer in the moral atmosphere which it created ; and then it summoned purer, nobler, hardier races to occupy the homes and to till the fields which Rome had depopulated and destroyed. It introduced its laws into every code in Christendom. King Alfred begins his statute book by reciting the laws of the kingdom of God.* In truth it has penetrated and

* King Alfred's " new book of laws " opens with the sentence, " And the Lord spake all these words and said, I am the Lord thy God," etc. Then follows the decalogue ; and then, " Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, that do ye also unto them." Besides, there are many passages quoted from the word of God, with most wise reflections on them and applications of them to the matter in hand ; and then he proceeds to the laws of the realm.

permeated every vein and fibre of human society, and it has made it all anew. There is literally nothing with which you in this nineteenth century can concern yourself,—trade, literature, politics, science, art, government, social and domestic life, human rights, human duties, human powers, human fears, aspirations, hopes, and joys,—there is not one element of our complex social and political life which is not what it is, because eighteen centuries ago the Lord Jesus witnessed this good confession before Pilate, “Thou sayest that which I am, a king.” From the world it has asked nothing, taken nothing, but its reverence and love: of the world in that sense it has never been. But in the world, and through the world, the stream of its heavenly virtue and life has wandered, and the wilderness and the solitary place have been made glad by it, and the desert has rejoiced and blossomed as the rose. It has sought studiously to mix itself up with all the relations and interests of mankind; it has a word about them all, it has a law for them all: the weight in the pedlar’s bag, the sceptre of the monarch on the throne, are alike under its rule and cognisance, for it claims man as man to be its subject. It says that man was made to be the subject of this kingdom, and all man’s life is the true domain of its sway. It looks upon this worldly life of ours—our life as men of this world—as the most solemn, most sacred thing in this universe; God’s school of culture of the beings who are to fill His heavenly kingdom through eternity. It cannot spare one relation of men, one art, one industry, one field of activity, one interest, one joy, one hope, one love, from its domain of empire. The whole man, the whole world, in the wholeness of its life, it claims absolutely; and it aims to present the whole man and his whole life, body, soul, and spirit, perfect before the presence of His glory at last. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

And now let me ask your attention to some principles which are suggested by a true understanding of this statement of our Lord.

1. His kingdom is not *of* this world. It is from above, and all the springs of its power are above. The attempt to help it from beneath, to bring the strength, the riches, the honour of this world to help the Spirit who is from above in the work of the kingdom, cripples its energies, frustrates its aims, and exhausts its life. Its one power is the power of truth; "to this end was I born, for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth," said its Founder and King. It has absolutely no other power. "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice;" and all the efforts of men to force, tempt, or bribe mankind to support it, but silence that witness, which is all that it asks to win the world to itself.

One can understand the argument of those who support a state establishment of religion and the whole apparatus by which men seek to win for it the supremacy to which it rightfully aspires. They say, "It is of God, it is the heavenly truth, it is worthy of all that men can give to it and of all the power which man can bring to bear on the accomplishment of its work: the state does itself honour, and gives itself stability by supporting it; monarchs are never so royal as in lending to it their influence; all the world's riches are never so precious as when they are poured into its treasuries, and are employed in the promotion of its ends."

And this is no more than the simple truth. The kingdom is worthy to receive the tribute of all the monarchs, the nobles, the wise ones, the rich ones of the world: the more it has of the good-will and help of every man, from the king to the beggar, the better for the kingdom, the better for mankind. All that we say is, Let it win them. Let it win in its own way, by putting forth its own power, the nursing care of the noble, the rich, and the wise. Leave it to employ its own spiritual force to do this and all at which it aims. Lend your heart to it, your

hand, your tongue, your pen, your purse, and everything else which it can command and use to win its way to human hearts. But if you bring your human authority to bear, to win from your subjects and dependants an outward homage, if you endow it with dead gifts administered by the scribes and lawyers of this world, if you lend worldly pomp and power to those who claim to be its ministers, you oppress and stifle it, and destroy its power of progress in the world. It wants free air, the free air of willing obedience, loyalty, and love. Rob it of that, it dies. It is not of this world. Every gift that is wrung for it from an unwilling hand beggars it. Its riches are the gifts of free will. Mere gold, with no spirit of loving loyalty in the giver, is worse than dross to it; it cankers and eats into its life. The power which has troops of soldiers and legal tribunals behind it blights it by its very breath. All that it asks is freedom; power to do what Christ did, in the way in which He did it; power to bear witness to the truth, and waken the long silent echoes of truth in human hearts. We have cut off its heavenly connection, and rooted it in the powers and policies of this world; and now we wonder that it languishes, and that one half the people in a Christian kingdom believe nothing of its truth and care nothing for its King. Oh! for the days of apostolic trust and simplicity, when the disciples, "continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people." Oh! for the baptism of Pentecostal fire from on high. Oh! for one of the days of the Son of man, whom the Father sent into the world, armed with no authority but that of truth, clothed with no power but that of love. How eagerly then, eager as the thirsty earth when the sound of rain is in the sky, would men drink in the words of Him who had more faith in the power of truth to conquer hearts than in the arms of twelve legions of angels, and whose supreme trust was in the all-mastering force of a love

stronger than death—a love that laid down its life that death might not for ever tyrannize over the world.

2. Make your life, your man's life in its wholeness, the domain of its empire in you. Beware of a double allegiance. How earnestly and emphatically the Lord denounces it: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Beware of yielding to Christ a part of the empire which is all His own. Beware of that fatal distinction between the man as a Christian, and the man as a citizen, the man as a man of business, which has grown out of the misunderstanding of the principle laid down by our Lord. Christian saint, Christian worshipper, Christian citizen, Christian merchant, Christian parent, be Christian wholly. Refuse to touch a thing in any department of your activity, which will not square with your Christian ideas and aims. Let your daily transactions be as freely open to Christ's inspection as to the world's honourable judgment: let it be the aim of your life at home, abroad, in the shop, the exchange, the forum, to show what the laws of Christ's kingdom can make of a life which is square with their precepts. Adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour, not by fellowship with His people only, but by winning men to worship Him by the spectacle of your diligence, your industry, your purity, your truth, your charity, gentleness, patience, faith, and hope in God; and when they learn that these are the King's gifts to you, at once the signs and the fruits of His reign, they will, like the people of old, break forth into thanksgiving, and confess joyfully that God is with you of a truth.

3. Count it your chief work on earth to be His fellow-helper in His kingdom; help to win for Him the empire of the world.

His kingdom is not of this world. But it is over this world, and it claims this world as its own. The Lord has a heart so large that only the world can fill it. He uttered its whole longing as He entered the cloud of the last agony:—"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Bear witness in the world that the one

thing needful to it is Christ. Tell statecraft that it needs the laws of the kingdom, to regulate its methods and indicate its ends. Tell monarchs that they need to observe the Monarch, that their rule may be a benediction to their subjects instead of a curse to cringing slaves. Tell citizens that they need to become citizens of this kingdom, that the commonwealth on earth may be the image of the vestibule of the commonwealth of the skies. Tell the masses that they need the instructions of this Master, that society may be less a den of selfish contentions, and more a field of gracious ministries and ennobling toils. Tell commerce that she needs the inspiration of this doctrine, that the dull, the common, the base may be transfigured and wear the forms of beauty, nobleness, and truth. Tell life that it needs the quickening of this spirit, that it may not drop piecemeal through the corruptions of sin into the darkness and rottenness of the pit. Above all, tell every soul that hears you, that it needs Christ, the living Bread; the bread of Christ's truth, the bread of Christ's life, the bread of Christ's love, that it may not settle in the darkness of death for ever, but "have everlasting life," where Christ lives and reigns at God's right hand eternally.

The Gospel according to Mark.

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. J. H. GODWIN.

BOOK I.

Introduction, and Ministry in Galilee.

PART I.

Preparation for the Ministry of Christ. (I. 1-13.)

¹THE beginning of the Glad-tidings of Jesus Christ, ^{Sec.} God's Son: ^{Minist} as it is written in the prophets. "Lo, I ^{John.}

The shorter title of the Gospel, as here given, is found in all the old MSS.

PART I. The brief preparatory narrative is peculiarly appropriate to the history of the public life of Jesus, by which He was manifested as the Saviour of the world. As not essential for this object, the few facts belonging to the early private life of Jesus, which are recorded in the first two chapters of the Gospels by St. Matthew and St. Luke are omitted.

SEC. I. In the account of the ministry of John, it is first described as preparatory and predicted; its place, purpose, and effects are then stated; and lastly his mode of life, and his testimony to Jesus. (Mark i. 1-8; Matt. iii. 1-12; Luke iii. 1-18.)

¹ The ministry of John was the beginning of the series of facts which were a new message of good from God to men; and these facts were according to prophecy. They related to Christ, and were declared by Him (ver. 14). His names describe Him as the Appointed Deliverer from the punishment and bondage of sin. (Matt. i. 21; John i. 42; Luke iv. 18.) He is the Saviour of men because He is the Son of God, having a Divine nature, dignity, and authority. (Mark i. 11; iii. 11; v. 7; ix. 7; xiii. 24; xiv. 61; xv. 39; Luke i. 35.)

² The prophecies especially referred to are Mal. iii. 1 and Isa. xl. 3. Some old MSS., instead of *the prophets*, have *the prophet Isaiah*. But this appears to be an incorrect completion of the text, from a comparison with the other Gospels (Matt. iii. 3; Luke iii. 4). The first quotation agrees in

send My messenger before Thy face, who shall make ready Thy way before Thee.” ³ *“The voice of one calling in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight the paths for Him.”*

⁴ John came, baptizing in the wilderness, and proclaim-

sense, though not exactly in form, with the Heb. and Sept.; but the same words are given when this prediction is quoted by Christ (Matt. xi. 10; Luke vii. 27). By connecting the first clause of this verse with the preceding, both sentences are made complete.

³ Only the prediction of Isaiah is given by the other evangelists; and it is referred to by John himself (John i. 23). The prophecy of which it is a part refers directly to the time of the Messiah, though not exclusively.

⁴ John was both prophet and priest; but the first was his chief character. As a prophet he preached to the people, as a priest he used a rite of purification similar to those administered by the priests. All public purifications with water, and all in which one person acted on another, were by sprinkling or affusion. These, and only these, were appointed by the law; and they are called baptisms. (Heb. ix. 10.) The same name was given to the common purifications of the Jews. (Mark vii. 4; Luke xi. 38.) There is nothing in any of the narratives of the N. T. to lead to the supposition that, either by John or by the disciples of Jesus, any persons were ever baptized except in the way in which the priests were accustomed to baptize people in public,—by the sprinkling of water. The same term which is used for the *rite* is also used for the *reality* of which it is an emblem. As there was a circumcision of the body and a circumcision of the mind, so there was a baptism of the body and a baptism of the mind. The baptism which was the *subject* of John's preaching, and which was *for* the remission of sins, was that of the mind. Justin Martyr speaks of the cleansing of repentance and the knowledge of God, and declares this to be the only baptism which can purify the person. (*Dial. cum Tryphone*, 231.) The baptism of repentance is a purification which consists in this, or comes from this (Rom. iv. 11; 2 Cor. v. 1, 5). The open district referred to is called the wilderness of Judæa (Matt. iii. 1). Repentance is a change of mind, of purpose—a change for the better, a turning from evil to good: reformation is its fruit. It refers to the will of God, and includes all that is known of Him. The kingdom of God is that manifestation of the Divine government which ensures safety, calls to service, imparts wealth and honour and happiness—of which Jesus is the King and His disciples the subjects. Of this kingdom John was the herald, and for it his ministry was a preparation.

ing the baptism of repentance for a release from sins. ⁶And there went out to him all the country of Judæa, and the people of Jerusalem; and all were baptized in the river Jordan by him, acknowledging their sins.

⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a leathern girdle round his waist, and was living on locusts and wild honey. ⁷And he proclaimed saying, One mightier than I is coming after me, of whom I am not worthy to stoop and loose the tie of His sandals. ⁸I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with a Divine Spirit.

⁵ The universal expressions can only be taken generally. The people were baptized in the river, as in the desert; within the banks of the one, and within the boundaries of the other; not being put into the water, or into the earth.

⁶ The appearance of John was like that of Elijah (2 Kings i. 8). His dress and diet are referred to Matt. xi. 8, 18. Locusts were common food (Lev. xi. 22).

⁷ The great power of Christ, first shown in what was material, but ever directed to what was moral, is often referred to in this Gospel. Christ is the Power and the Wisdom of God. (1 Cor. i. 24.) The Gospel is the power of God for salvation. (Rom. i. 16.)

⁸ *With water* (Luke iii. 16) is an unambiguous expression, by which the preposition found in St. Matthew and St. Mark should be interpreted. Water and fire are means of purifying what is material: that which corresponds to them is a means by which the mind is purified.

Prophecies were fulfilled in the ministry of John and in the person of Christ.

Repentance is a necessary preparation for the kingdom of God.

Asceticism is not useless; rites have no peculiar efficacy. Christ's dignity is the highest; His power is spiritual and Divine.

Sec. II. ⁹ And it was in those days, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John at the Jordan. ¹⁰ And directly ascending from the water, he saw the heavens divided, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon Him. ¹¹ And there was a voice from the heavens, THOU ART MY SON, THE BELOVED, WITH WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED.

SEC. II. The baptism of Jesus by John is next related, as by St. Matthew and St. Luke; chiefly on account of the testimony from heaven, which is given by all the evangelists in nearly the same words (Mark i. 9-11; Matt. iii. 13-17; Luke iii. 21-23).

The time is more definitely given by St. Luke, who says that the ministry of John began in the fifteenth year of Tiberius. It probably continued for a year. On this supposition, the baptism of Jesus was about 779 A.U.C. = 25 A.D., and at least two months before the passover, the forty days in the wilderness intervening. The place where the baptism was, and not the matter into which, is indicated by the preposition. There was a coming to the Jordan (Luke ix. 61; xxi. 37; John ix. 7; xxi. 4; Acts viii. 40; xviii. 21; xxi. 13).

¹⁰ The appearance had a material form; but the comparison seems to be with the movement, rather than with the shape, of a dove.

¹¹ Such a testimony was given on two other occasions—on the mount of transfiguration (ix. 7), and in the temple (John xii. 28). In the second case the testimony is the same, with the addition "Hear Him." In the third, Jesus said that the voice did not come for His sake, but for that of the people (John xii. 30). He did not need such a sign (John xi. 42). The Divine voice heard at Sinai was very different in character (Exod. xx. 18; Deut. iv. 33; Heb. xii. 19). The prophetic testimonies are similar (Ps. ii. 7; Isa. xlii. 1).

Order should be observed, and the high share in service with the low.

The material is in many ways the manifestation of the spiritual.

Christ was the object of Divine approval and delight and favour.

God's Spirit is given to prepare for His service.

¹² And immediately the Spirit sends Him out into the wilderness; ¹³ and He was there in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. And He was with the wild animals; and the angels ministered to Him.

Szc.
Temp
tion o
Christ

Szc. III. A brief and general record of the temptations of Christ follows the account of His baptism. The details of the other evangelists are not given, but there are similar statements respecting the agency and object, the place and duration, of the peculiar mental conflict which followed the baptism—the inauguration of Jesus—and preceded His public ministry. (Mark i. 12, 13; Matt. iv. 1–11; Luke iv. 1–13.)

¹² Guided and moved by the Divine Spirit, our Lord withdrew for a time into solitude, for meditation and prayer. The consideration of what He had received, and what He had to do and to suffer, was natural and proper. This was the occasion of temptations similar to those of men, through the experience of which He was able to sympathise with and to succour the tempted. (Heb. ii. 17; iv. 15.) Satan is the Hebrew name for the great adversary; by the other evangelists he is called the devil. Similar was the retirement of Moses and Elijah. (Exod. xxiv. 18; 1 Kings xix. 8.)

¹³ The mention of the wild animals is peculiar to St. Mark (Acts xi. 6; Heb. xii. 20); it seems merely to indicate separation from men. A reference to them as objects of terror, or as subjects of authority, if designed, would be more explicit; and neither would be appropriate. The ministry of angels was probably to supply bodily sustenance, for which the same term is used ver. 31.

Exposure to trial is a Divine appointment for good.
(Jas. i. 2.)

Temptation, with a view to evil, comes from the Evil One.

Solitude and reflection are requisite for the service of God.

His angels are the ministers of His children. (Heb. i. 14.)

PART II.

*Ministry in Galilee, to the Mission of the Apostles.*DIV. I. *Miracles in Capernaum.—First Journey.* (I. 14–45.)

1. I.
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“ Now after that John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the Glad-tidings of the kingdom of God: ¹⁵ saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is near: repent, and have faith in the Glad-tidings.

DIV. I. (Chap. i. 14–45.) After the introduction, St. Mark, as St. Matthew and St. Luke, proceeds at once to the ministry in Galilee, passing over the events recorded by St. John,—the testimony of the Baptist after the return of Jesus from the wilderness,—the first disciples,—the first miracle,—the first passover,—the first ministry in Jerusalem and Judæa,—the journey through Samaria,—and the second miracle in Cana of Galilee. During this period St. John was present, when other of the apostles were not; and his narrative is in general supplementary to theirs. St. Mark begins his account of the ministry in Galilee with a narrative of what took place in Capernaum just before the first journey. Two days in this town show what the ministry of Jesus subsequently was in many other towns. There was the same manifestation of Divine power and goodness: multitudes were drawn to Him, some became His devoted servants, all were filled with wonder and awe, and at first no opposition appears.

SEC. I. General statements respecting the return of Jesus to Galilee, and the nature of His ministry, are given by the three evangelists. The time and occasion of the return are stated, the announcement made, and the duty enjoined. (Mark i. 14, 15; Matt. iv. 12–17; Luke iv. 14, 15.)

¹⁴ By the Pharisees John had been delivered up to Herod, and he was now in prison (Mark vi. 17; ix. 13). Their opposition to Jesus then increased, and gave occasion to His departure from the places where they had most influence (John iv. 1). According to the indication of time (John iv. 35), the return to Galilee was in November, four months before the harvest. The harvest of which the disciples would speak was the *natural*, that of which Jesus spoke was the *spiritual*.

¹⁵ A time was predicted by Daniel ix. 25, and in all previous ages there was a preparation for the coming of Christ. When the fulness of time came, God sent forth His Son (Gal. iv. 4). The duty enjoined is more than *belief*. With a preposition, the verb always has the larger signification of *faith, trust*.

¹⁶ Now walking about by the lake of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon, casting out a drag-net in the lake; for they were fishers. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, Come after Me, and I will make you to be

Seco
Call
Disci

Opposition in one place may occasion departure to another.

God's government is a cause to men for the greatest gladness.

Its progress is in an appointed order—slow, but sure.

Evil being in purpose forsaken, good may in faith be hoped for.

SEC. II. After the general statements, the first narrative exhibits the power of Jesus over the minds of men. It is placed by St. Matthew in the same connection. Four disciples were called to attend Him in journeying about the country. This required the relinquishment of their daily pursuits; but it brought them into closer intercourse with their Lord, and prepared them to be His witnesses,—men who in His service would seek the salvation of their fellow-men. From Matt. iv. 13, and Luke iv. 23, it appears that Jesus stayed some time in Capernaum. A week before the sabbath in this place noticed by the three evangelists, He appeared in the synagogue of Nazareth and taught there. This is related by St. Luke after the general statements. With the sabbath in Nazareth he connects the following sabbath in Capernaum, and then introduces a narrative corresponding to that here given, which belongs to the intervening week. There appears thus to be a slight deviation from the chronological order, to connect and contrast two consecutive sabbaths; but there is no inconsistent statement of time. St. Mark and St. Matthew relate the call, and not the miracle; St. Luke the miracle without the call, but with the same *promise* and the same *obedience*. Time and place are the same, and three out of four names. The call may have been on the day after the miracle, and the last statement of St. Luke would then agree exactly with the similar statement of the other evangelists. Only at one time could the disciples forsake all to follow Him. The agitation of Peter's mind agrees with an early rather than a later period; and the breaking of the nets, in one narrative, exactly agrees with the mending mentioned in the others. (Mark i. 16–20; Matt. iv. 18–22; Luke v. [1–10] 11.)

¹⁸ The lake is also called that of Tiberias (John vi. 1). Both Simon and

fishers of men. ¹⁸ And directly leaving their nets, they followed Him.

¹⁹ And going forward thence a little, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, themselves also in the boat mending the nets; ²⁰ and He directly called them. And leaving their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, they went away after Him.

EC. III.
Cure of a
demoniac
in the Syn-
agogue.

²¹ And they go on into Capernaum; and directly on the sabbath, entering into the synagogue, He taught.

Andrew were before disciples (John i. 41, 42); now they were called to be attendants; afterwards they were appointed to be apostles (Mark iii. 14). The repetition of the name of Simon is supported by the best MSS., and is similar to Mark iii. 17, v. 37.

¹⁸ The forsaking and following *outwardly* could not be duties for all; but *inwardly* the duties and the privileges are for all.

¹⁹ John appears as a disciple before the first passover (John i. 41); James is not previously noticed: their mother Salome is afterwards mentioned alone (Mark xv. 40; Matt. xxvii. 56). The nets on this occasion were broken (Luke v. 6); on a subsequent occasion it is expressly said that they were not (John xxi. 11).

Some are separated for special service in the ministry of the Gospel.

Such are called by Christ, and prepared for work by being with Him.

Other pursuits and possessions are to be relinquished, when required by Him.

His ministers labour patiently and in darkness, but successfully.

SEC. III. The last sabbath in Capernaum, before the first journey in Galilee, was distinguished by the preaching in the synagogue and the cure of a demoniac there, by the restoration of Peter's mother-in-law, and by the healing of many in the street on the evening of the same day. Of the preaching only a general account is given, the impression produced being especially noticed. The first miracle is related in the same connection, with similar details, by St. Luke. It is unnoticed by St. Matthew, not belonging

²² And they were astonished at His teaching, for He was teaching them as having authority, and not as the scribes.

²³ And there was in their synagogue a man with an evil spirit; and it cried out saying, ²⁴ Away! what hast Thou to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Didst Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art,—the Holy One of God. ²⁵ And Jesus rebuked it, saying, Be still, and come out of him. ²⁶ And the evil spirit convulsing him, and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.

to either of the three groups in which the early miracles of Christ are related by him. The piteous outcry of the demoniac disturbs the assembly, and bears testimony to the dignity of Christ. The Saviour's words expel the evil spirit, and restore to health the afflicted man. The effect of the teaching of Jesus was increased by this exercise of Divine authority (Mark i. 21-28; Luke iv. 31-37).

²² The scribes expounded the law of Moses; but Jesus gave a new law, expressing His will as the manifestation of the Divine will: *I say to you*. They gave traditional interpretations; He made truth evident to the judgments and consciences of men. They spoke and did not; His conduct and character enforced all He taught, for He ever sought the good of men and the honour of God, nothing for Himself.

²⁴ Literally, *What to us and to Thee?* so in a similar case, Mark v. 7. The expression is similar, 2 Sam. xvi. 10 and John ii. 4, "What hast Thou to do with me?" The acknowledgment of the Divine dignity of Jesus by the evil spirit is similar to that made by St. Peter (John vi. 69), and corresponds to our Lord's words respecting Himself (John x. 36). He did come to undo the works of the devil, and to overturn his dominion (1 John iii. 8; Heb. ii. 14). The demons are also called unclean or evil spirits, and wicked spirits. They are Satan's ministers. The demoniacs are distinguished from all other diseased persons (Mark i. 34; Matt. iv. 24). The demons are described as having knowledge and feelings, not belonging to the afflicted men, and as existing separately. Christ thus spoke to them, and of them (Mark v. 2; ix. 17). If there are wicked men who can injure the bodies and minds of their fellow men, there may be other beings of a similar character and influence. The mightiest agencies are unseen, and known but partially through their effects. There is much in the disorders of the bodies and minds of

“ And all were amazed, so that they sought among themselves, saying, What is this? what is this new teaching? that with authority He orders even the evil spirits, and they are obedient to Him. ” And the report concerning Him went forth directly to all the surrounding country of Galilee.

men, of which physicians can give no account. Scripture offers an explanation which is certainly reasonable: it accords with many analogies, and accounts for the *residuary* phenomena of science.

“ The surrounding country may be either Galilee itself, or the adjacent lands. But the report from Capernaum would first go to Galilee; other countries are subsequently mentioned. The surrounding country of the Gadarenes was their country. (Luke viii. 37.)

The words and the works of Jesus declared a Divine authority.

Evil spirits have some power to distress the bodies and minds of men.

They have some knowledge of Christ, and in fear obey Him.

He came to deliver men from all their evil influence.

THE TEXT from which this translation has been made is that which appeared to the writer to be the most correct. It agrees with the Received Text, from which the common version is made, more than most recent editions of the New Testament do; and deviates from the former only when some of the latter, and many critical authorities, support the same change. The older manuscripts are generally to be preferred; but their frequent omissions lessen the value of their testimony to the shorter readings. No English translation can have any authority, unless it represents the Original text. The aim of the writer has been to ascertain and to follow this.

THE TRANSLATION is designed to give the exact meaning of the Greek in the English of the present day, keeping as closely as possible to the original, both in sense and style.

Outlines.

St. Paul's Episode on Love.—PART I.

“ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”—1 Cor. xiii. 1.

THE chapter of which this verse is the commencement forms a most interesting episode upon Christian love. It is the most eloquent passage in this epistle, perhaps the most eloquent passage in holy writ. Coming from the apostle Paul, this triumphant song of Christian love comes with all the more beauty and power. The chief characteristic of the apostle Paul's teaching is not love, but faith. It is John who is considered the apostle of love. But far above any passage of St. John in depth of fervour and power is this episode on love. As often, under the rough manner and impassive exterior burns the strongest fire of emotion, and from such, when once the outer barrier is burst, it flows all the more impetuously and irresistibly,—so here this rugged preacher, this close reasoner, masculine writer, and manly character gives unmistakable proof that down underneath his strength of intellect was a deep well of enthusiasm, a living fountain of holy love.

The love here discoursed upon is not the weak, sentimental feeling which sometimes is understood by the word love. So far as we can judge, Paul would be the last of the apostles to discourse on such a subject. In his character there seems to have been a slight want of respectful chivalry of feeling for the other sex. In many of the apostle's allusions to women this is apparent. The ability and power, however, with which he handles this new, more general, and more spiritual feeling, termed charity or love, shows that it must be essentially different from that shallow form of feeling which the world hitherto associated exclusively with the word love.

There is no term in our language that exactly renders

the idea of the apostle. The word "charity" is open to the objection of being in popular usage limited to almsgiving and kindly feeling. The word "love" again is open to the opposite objection of being too general. The author of "Ecce Homo," feeling the unsuitableness of either expression, has sought to convey more definitely this New Testament idea by the expression "enthusiasm of humanity." The simple term "love," however, although too general, is the best equivalent we can employ.

In the figure of the text we have suggested :—

I. That tongues without love are *empty*. "Though speak," etc. By the expression "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal" is conveyed the idea of emptiness. The clanging of brass and the tinkling of bells awaken in us no noble thoughts, produce no soothing or elevating impression; they are often empty vibrations. And so it often is with words, they are but empty vibrations; they affect the ear, but touch not the soul, evoke not the feelings, elevate not the thoughts; they carry nothing more than the tinkling bells or the clanging brass; they are words without soul, because without love. We readily understand what is meant by soulless poetry—poetry without love, words with rhythm and flow, but rousing no noble thought, calling forth no deep emotion. And as in poetry, so in prose; words that are to move and affect and influence us for good must carry with them the vitality and power of love. Without the pervading spirit of love, they are no more than the empty sounds of the clanging brass and the tinkling cymbal.

Words expressive of love, given forth from a loveless heart, are worse than empty. They are spurious coin, the chilling rays of the silvery moon in lieu of warm sunshine, empty shadows instead of realities, paper money never redeemed. The employment of such empty words often has the effect of checking in others the expression of sincere and truly loving words. Many Christians, especially of education and taste, because of

the emptiness of much of such speaking, dislike to give utterance to what their hearts really feel respecting their love for Christ and His people.

So great however is the tendency of the tongue to speak from motives of vanity or from inability to be silent, that even the miraculous gift of tongues which the early Christians received from God was often mis-employed in this way. The object of this gift was to give expression to the fulness of the speaker's heart, and to promote the edification of those who heard. The Corinthians forgot this; and selfish motives and personal vanity, more than love for God and one another, induced them to make use of the gift of tongues so that, in a great measure, they fell as empty, meaningless sounds.

And when is it that Christians feel most keenly the lack of the gift, or rather as it must now be termed the acquirement, of tongues? Is it not when, in company with foreign Christian friends, the ignorance of their language prevents interchange of sympathy and confidence? or when parting with such, after they have shown us "no small kindness," we desire to express to them a few parting, loving words? or perhaps when in a foreign country we see the people given to idolatry and we are stirred up to tell them of Him who loved them and gave Himself for them? It has ever been this desire of speaking of God's great love to perishing sinners that has in times past been foremost in prompting the Christian missionary to face the labour of acquiring unknown tongues. And how empty is any other object—commerce, science, philosophy, literature, etc., in comparison with that of proclaiming the love of God to man, and man's love to his brother man. "Though I speak with," etc.

II. The figure of our text suggests that tongues without love are, secondly, *discordant*.

The objection of musical ears to the sound of tinkling bells and clanging brass is not merely that it is empty, but sometimes discordant. The music is harsh, grates

disagreeably upon the ear. And too often the use of the tongue produces a very similar impression. We can readily imagine the discordance in the Church of Corinth, from the employment of many different tongues, without love to guide their use and give them harmony.

It is not otherwise with tongues, in its widest sense. Without love the utterances of the tongue are jarring and discordant. Mankind, with so many different views and feelings, each seeking his own interest, and instead of pulling together pulling too often in opposite directions, may be likened to a set of musical instruments out of tune, or played upon out of time and harmony with one another. Let musicians play upon instruments out of tune, and the result is harsh and unpleasant; the most practised and the most skilful players will fail to extract harmony from them. Or sound any set of instruments at random, without reference to harmony or without something to guide the players, and there is a babel of discordant noises. But tune the discordant strings, and let the musicians play in concert; and the result is harmonious music.

The great Tuner of mankind is Christ and His love. He came to bring us into harmony with God, and thereby into harmony with one another. He is the "at-one-ment" for the human family. By sin man is out of harmony with the world; and until sin be taken away, there will never cease to be discord. Those wondrous instruments that were made to sing the praises of God, alas! alas! are out of tune. Some lie, broken wrecks, from which no music apparently can ever be extracted; others, when handled, send forth sounds harsh and shrill; or when we collect them together, and attempt to sound them in unison, how difficult to bring out of them sweet harmony, perfect concord!

To the eye that looks through the medium of love, all things appear in harmony and to be clothed in rosy tints. And when God's great love fills the heart, it brings it into harmony, into tune with everything around it. Let

see all things through the lens of God's love, and every cloud becomes silver-edged, and every path full of flowers.

And as by *looking* through God's love all things that seemed to be jarring and discordant are seen to be in harmony and full of beauty, so by *speaking* through that medium of love the tongues that were before discordant sound in perfect unison. If the heart be filled with love, the tongue will not fail to be sweetened by it. The tongue that is not thus tuned by the love of Christ is a terrible instrument of discord in the world. See 1 Cor. xiii. 6-12.

To tune all the discordant voices of the human family, since Christ has come, and seeks to make heart accord with heart; for if tongue is to be in harmony with heart, it must first beat in unison with heart. From the cadence of the heart the mouth speaketh. Christ teaches us one by giving us one Spirit, His own Spirit, Spirit of love; and that Spirit softens down the tones that are harsh, puts to shame what is discordant, and teaches the tongue for joining in those praises which occupy the redeemed day and night in that land of perfect harmony where nothing that is discordant will ever sound. The lesson of our text is obvious—*If our tongues are to be powerful, our hearts must be loving.*

For effective public speaking, many are the directions. Fill the mind with knowledge; arrange the thoughts in order; put them in attractive forms; enunciate them according to the rules of rhetoric: worthy all of our attention. But more important still is it that we speak with love. Without love the speaking will be but empty talk. "Though I speak," etc.

Is the employment of the tongue confined to the domestic circle? Much has been said also on the conventional art; but forget not that without love you cannot rise above the emptiness of the "sounding brass tinkling cymbal." Without love, talk is soulless, is empty.

If we are to speak with power to the comforting hearts, to the lessening of others' burdens, the brightening of others' paths, and the sweetening of others' lot, we must have the great fountain of love within—Christ dwelling in us. The love of Christ beaming in the eye, shining in the face, often makes ordinary features appear like the face of an angel, and raises words few and faltering far above, in power and usefulness, the showy and brilliant talk of the merely fluent and sprightly tongue.

If God has entrusted you with the gift of talking interestingly and engagingly, give to it soul and fervour, warmth and power, by having it flow not from vanity or the desire of display, but from love to those around you, and love to Him who first loved you. Be not satisfied with avoiding the charge of *discordance*; avoid also that of *emptiness*.

DAVID LONGWILL.

The Christian's Estate.

“All are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.”—1 Cor. iii. 22, 23 —

I. *The Christian's title to his estate*—derived from his union with Christ. “All things are yours” because “ye are Christ's.” In illustration of this union we have the relation of husband and wife. They are one in law, one in possessions and obligations, one in purpose and affection. This union with Christ implies union with God: “and Christ is God's.” It gives us an interest in all His Father's estate. As He is the Proprietor of the universe, therefore *all things are ours*.

This title is written, not on parchment, but in our hearts, and read by Christian experience, therefore cannot be destroyed except by ourselves.

II. *The Christian's estate surveyed*. A wealthy man once showed a friend his extensive and beautiful property: standing on the roof of his house, and sweeping

his hand round, he exclaimed, "All you see from the hills to the sea is my property." His friend replied, "There lives in a cottage in that village one who can say more than you; he can say, '*All things are mine, for I am Christ's.*'" (1) All things in the Church are yours: all its members, and their gifts and graces, are for your use and advantage. All are one with you in Christ, and to their labours and efforts you are entitled. Inspired men taught, great men laboured, holy men prayed and suffered for you. Yours the glorious company of the apostles; yours the noble choir of prophets; yours the great army of the martyrs. (2) The world is yours: all in it is bestowed in such measure, and in such a way, as God sees best for your well-being and interests. Hence, say, "We shall not lack any good, for the Lord is our God; and the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." The fields yield their abundance, and the hills are fashioned in beauty, for you. The great and wide sea is yours, for God made and rules it. The sun is yours, for light is the reflection of your Father's glory. (3) Life and death are yours. Christians redeemed from death's power and united to the Lord of life have a title life, and are His, not like others, only suffered by pity restraining the hand of justice to live. Life in all its variety of events is yours, for your use and advantage its prosperity, its adversity, etc. "All these things I have done against me," said Jacob, not wisely—all for you. Death is yours; for when it shall suit your welfare, death shall come as a servant to "minister an entrance unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom." (4) Eternity is yours—things to come. For others, all good things close with time,

. . . "Even as the mists
Of the grey morn before the rising sun,
They pass away and perish."

But the noblest part of your inheritance lies beyond the

dark river. For you eternity unfolds its inexhaustible treasures.

“ For you the kingdom of the just
 Afar doth glorious shine ;
 And you the King of kings shall see
 In majesty Divine.”

If Christians realised their condition, they would have more joy and less anxiety. None are excluded from the offer of this portion. “ Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.”

JOHN C. JACKSON.

Onesimus.

“ I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.”—*Philemon* 10.

I. NONE NEED DESPAIR OF BEING SAVED.

Onesimus was “ *begotten again*,” though poor ; he was a servant or slave. Poverty no hindrance to salvation ; though ignorant, as such generally were ; though depraved—possibly had robbed his master and decamped ; though a runaway—having gone, as we should think, from the means of grace—yet the Lord met with his soul. Recently at a religious service in St. Helena, a sailor was “ *begotten again*,” who had run away from home in England, and left a praying mother, and had given himself up to the vices of the age.

II. NONE CAN BE IN CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE THEY MAY NOT OR CAN NOT BE USEFUL.

“ I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom *I have begotten in my bonds*.” Paul a prisoner : Bunyan and others yet were very active and useful. Some have been useful though afflicted and in bodily pain : some useful, when led to the stake. Dr. Payson, when he could no longer preach, but was confined to his chamber, yet prayed with and talked to those who visited him, and

souls were blessed. ' Some useful who were not rich nor learned, yet have spoken for Christ and the good of souls.

III. NONE SHOULD BE ABOVE OWNING OR ACKNOWLEDGING A FELLOW CHRISTIAN.

"I beseech thee for *my son* Onesimus," etc., and Paul in Colossians iv. 9 calls him "a faithful and beloved brother." This, though he was wise and learned, etc., and the other the reverse; so should it be now, between old and young, rich and poor, literate and illiterate.

IV. NONE SHOULD CEASE TO CARE FOR YOUNG CONVERTS.

"*I beseech thee* for Onesimus," etc. First plead *with* them, then *for* them, with God and man.

J. C.

Foreign Pulpit.

OUTLINE OF A SERMON ON THE RESURRECTION.

BY J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE, D.D., OF UTRECHT.

(TRANSLATED BY MAURICE J. EVANS, B.A.)

“So also is the resurrection of the dead.”—1 Cor. xv. 42.

THE resurrection of the dead! Once the great apostle preached before a distinguished audience on this lofty subject, but with very unfavourable results. Upon the Areopagus at Athens, Paul had laid down an explicit and powerful testimony concerning the One True God, to whom they rendered blind devotion. Full of interest have they listened while he asserted, with one of their ancient poets, the kinship of man with God. But so soon as he comes to speak of a Man whom God has raised from the dead, a smile begins to play around those eloquent Attic lips. Most unequivocally do they give him to understand that for this time, if indeed only for this time, they have heard enough: “when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, and others said, We will hear thee again on this matter.”

To what extent have feelings changed since then? Mockers, in the proper sense of the word, we do not expect to find in a Christian assembly; but is there not such a thing as a tacit ignoring, a secret rejection of the truth, to be found even in many a house of prayer, by reason of which it bears some resemblance to the Areopagus at Athens? More general than is supposed is the spirit of Sadducean indifference which, buried in the dust and mire of the earth, has no eye and no heart for the great expectation of the future. Many conceive of a spirit-

world, so spiritual as to be entirely beyond the domain of our conception ; many, on the other hand, clothe the Scriptural teaching concerning the resurrection in forms and colours so sensuous as to make us almost doubt whether the words “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ” have not fallen out of their edition of the Bible.

In making the resurrection the object of our inquiry, we have set before us a difficult task. Questions here arise which no human, perhaps no angelic intellect can satisfactorily answer. But counterbalancing the difficulty is the importance of the subject ; and in entering upon ground not easy to tread, we design only to follow apostolic footprints. We take counsel of an apostle before whose Divinely irradiated eye the mysteries of the future are unveiled, and seek in his hand the key to the enigmas of eternity.

The resurrection of the dead, as presented to us in the remarkable chapter from which our text is chosen, we propose to investigate under three distinctive heads—the *essential character of the resurrection*, the *certainty of the resurrection*, and the *glory of the resurrection*.

I. 1. The resurrection is *not the work of an age*, but of *a moment ; not a gradual process*, but an *instantaneous act*. “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump,” etc. It is not then identical with a continued existence in the unseen world ; and they who claim for each individual a separate resurrection immediately after death find no countenance for their opinion in the language of inspiration. The resurrection of the dead and the coming of Christ are in Paul’s mind inseparably connected. He sees at one and the same moment the clouds of heaven descend, upon which the Judge appears ; and the graves of earth open, from which the dead arise. In the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, as well as in the chapter before us, he describes sleeping believers as arising at the coming of Jesus Christ ; as also he teaches the Philippians to look for the appearing of

the Saviour from heaven, and the transforming of the body of their humiliation into the likeness of His glorious body, as simultaneous events.

Behold something of that which is before the eye of Paul. The world yet goes on its old way, the sinner dreams his old dreams, the slave toils on in his old field which yet brings forth the old thorns and thistles; when suddenly the last trumpet sounds. Then they who are fallen asleep in Christ arise first; and afterwards, in God's time, all the dead. This resurrection-hour, closely as it is connected with the final and universal judgment, yet *immediately* precedes the renewal of the visible creation to a new heaven and a new earth. Such is the anticipation of the apostle; and in whatever mysterious distance this great and terrible day may lie hidden, every stroke of the clock on earth is but a prelude to the last trumpet-clang of the resurrection morning.

2. (a) The resurrection is to be distinguished in its nature from *an awakening out of a soul-sleep*. Of this latter there is no trace in Scripture. Try indeed to conceive of an Abraham, a Moses, a David, a Paul—the departed of whom Jesus declared they “all live unto God”—as remaining through long centuries in a state of unconsciousness; and the folly of such a supposition becomes at once apparent. If the spirit even here continue its thought and activity during the sleep of the body, how shall it not much more when this “mortal coil” is laid for ever aside?

(b) No less clearly is the resurrection to be distinguished from *a clothing of the unclothed spirit*. Paul knows that if he dies before the coming of the Lord he shall not be found naked, but clothed, and that he shall immediately on the breaking-up of the earthly tabernacle receive a building of God, an organization adapted to the new condition of the emancipated spirit. But with the resurrection he looks for more than this; he looks for such a renewing of the whole man as that the spirit may be again united to the risen and glorified body, henceforth

to enjoy a perfection of blessedness which until then his eye has not seen, nor his ear heard.

(c) The resurrection to be looked for is not *a restoration of our flesh and bone in like form as before*. Such an idea is expressly controverted by the apostle in the words, "Corruption doth not inherit incorruption." This dust returns to its dust, and decomposes in the bosom of the earth, enters into other and very different combinations. But then, like as in the seed-corn the germ of the glorious blooming plant lies concealed, so is (according to the apostle) in this our earthly body the germ of our future heavenly body already present. This germ, which science cannot explain and the eye cannot discover, becomes the substratum of the future body: undestroyed by the tooth of time, unharmed by the flame of fire, it somewhere remains and grows and ripens unto the great harvest when the plant shall bloom in perfect beauty.

3. In perfect beauty. This thought leads to an inquiry concerning the life of the resurrection itself; and to the questions which crowd upon us as to the risen life of the believer, we receive the authoritative answer, "As we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly"—likeness then to the second Adam in purity, joy, and incorruptibility, as we here resemble the first Adam in sin, misery, and death. In order to grasp this truth, think of the Lord as He manifested Himself on several occasions, in silent resurrection glory, during those ever memorable forty days; think of Him as He now lives in eternity, exalted above all the limits of time and space; and then feel the power of the words, "As is the heavenly One, such are they also that are heavenly." Or will you rather compare body with body, house with the earthly tabernacle? Then listen to the powerful contrasts in which the apostle reveals his expectation of the future. The body "is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in

weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

Conceive of a body, entirely in harmony with the heavenly economy ; a dwelling, in its nature as perfect as the redeemed occupant ; a mussel, as precious as the pearl enclosed therein ; a life, in a word, which can never become burdensome, never tire, never end. Or would you the eternal were placed before your eyes in living figures ? Think of a youth in which juvenile freshness is accompanied with the ripeness of mature years ; of a morning whose brilliancy is overshadowed by no cloud, and dissolved by no evening ; of a spring born out of the winter of death, but not expiring with the chills of autumn ; and you have before you the image of the resurrection life, and exclaim with growing desire, " O glorious ideal, who shall witness thy realization ? "

II. We are called to listen to a three-fold voice, which testifies to the fidelity of the apostle's description of the scene which opens before his eye.

1. There is *the voice of nature, which shadows forth such a resurrection*. The apostle Paul directs Christians to nature—to the seed and plant—as an interpreter of the hope of the future. I grant indeed that nature alone does not afford the *assurance* of our resurrection. The buds and blossoms which burst forth from the graves of plants earlier faded are not *the same* as those we saw fade and die away. But now that our hope of resurrection is established upon another and better foundation, the eye enlightened through faith in Christ sees the resurrection reflected in this visible creation, which proclaims in field and garden as well the *nature* as the *possibility* of that life. If you had never lived through a harvest, but had only witnessed a seed-time, and had seen the dead corn cast into the bosom of the earth, where the rough husk turns to corruption and perishes, would you not have regarded as a deceiver him who with prophetic tone should assure you, " From this bed of corruption will arise in a few months a stem whose upraised head is

laden with a hundred other grains"? And yet this phenomenon is continually presented in nature. And may not, for man also, a like unclothing be a pledge of a like development? Shall it not be too wonderful for God to adorn the leafless tree with new foliage? and shall it be so for Him to bring forth, out of the ashes of death, the incorruptible robe which the children of the resurrection wear? Some one may object, "Man will then receive a clothing which bears no relation to the garment of the dust laid aside by him at death." "Thou fool," would Paul reply to him, "is the plant which stands there in its splendour any other than the seed which was cast into the dark furrow, but now developed, grown to maturity, and bearing fruit?" The future butterfly slumbers in the unattractive caterpillar; the flower in the bud; the precious stone awaits the hand of the lapidary to bring forth its hidden beauty. In the man of eighty winters no fibre of the body is in the same condition as when once it was refreshed at his mother's breast; but is it therefore no longer the same body? And is the Moses, who with shining countenance descended from the mountain of the glory of God, another Moses than he who as an infant wept in his cradle of bulrushes?

Thus are they who combat the hope of the resurrection refuted by the whole visible creation, and shown to merit the reproach of the Lord,—“Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.” For

2. *The testimony of Scripture confirms the hope of such a resurrection.* To the Scripture the apostle appeals in replying to the doubts of the Corinthians; before this he bows, and accepts it (like an oath) as an end of all strife. Even from the Old Testament he selects weapons for the defence of the truth: an Isaiah proclaims to him that death shall be swallowed up in victory; and out of the mouth of a Hosea he hears the Christian song of victory over death and the grave. But why need we, for our present purpose, have regard to these hints, when Paul himself points us to the glorious facts recorded in the

gospel of the new covenant, which form a basis of granite to the superstructure of Christian hope? With the resurrection of Christ on the third day the hope of resurrection is raised above all doubts, and becomes, so to speak, instead of a problem an axiom. The sceptic speaks of the resurrection as a thing impossible; "but," we reply "it is already *accomplished* in Christ; and for Him who brought again, renewed and glorified, the pierced body of the Crucified, it cannot be too wonderful to bring again with Him those who sleep in Christ, at the great day of His return." There is much more than the possibility; the certainty of this event is pledged to all future centuries by the resurrection of Jesus. Upon the third day was the seal impressed upon *that* promise also: "The hour cometh, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth." His relation, as Head of the Church, demands imperatively that the members should not remain in death; and where the first-fruits are already gathered, the full harvest cannot always be wanting. "And if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you," what is this but one pledge more that "He will also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit"?

3. *The testimony of the Spirit within awakens such an expectation*: I mean not the voice of flesh and blood, but of that Spirit within the believer's heart which testifies that he is born of God. Often does the apostle refer us to this hope as the great power which supports him amidst all his sufferings and conflicts, the lever which ever raises him when he is sunk in the dust. And in doing so he speaks not for himself alone, but in the name of all believers. What else places him in a position to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord? what else urges forward those who, somewhat superstitiously indeed, allow themselves to be baptized over the dead? what forces to their lips the question how it will be on the last day with those still

living on the earth, if the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the dead be only an empty dream? No, the Christian's innermost consciousness testifies that not only shall his soul be with Christ from the hour of death, but also his "I," his whole personality, shall live again. "Thou shalt rise again" has a voice within you whispered, as you sorrowed over the lifeless dust of a departed believer. "Thou shalt rise again" a thousand voices within us cry, as we walk through the ever reviving nature and feel that we ourselves die daily, whilst there slumber within us powers which can never ripen in the cold soil and wintry atmosphere of this earth. "Thou shalt rise again:" we read this in the breaking eye of the believer, which beams already with the first dawn of everlasting life. Call the cherishing of this hope folly, delusion, if you will; but in what then does true wisdom consist? Or rather call this indescribable feeling, this indestructible consciousness, a prophecy of the hour of resurrection, and say *Amen* to the apostolic utterance, "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

III. And now we have attained a height from which to speak, though in stammering accents, of *the glory of that resurrection* whose image we have described, and whose certainty we have shown. Behold the hour for which the whole sighing creation has been waiting with earnest longing! The Lord is come, and His own are all raised with Him to an incorruptible life. Those who remain will be so changed by God's creative power that, without dying, they will be fitted for the life of the future; and so many of them as are believers will be clothed with the heavenly dwelling, so that mortality will be swallowed up of life. Do you not feel how glorious beyond all description will be this appearance of the Prince of Life in His glory? Consider then *the enemy which at this hour shall be annihilated; the condition of happiness which at this hour shall be brought in; and the kingdom of God which at this hour shall be completed.*

1. "The last enemy," Paul teaches us, "which shall be destroyed, is death;" as though he would call our attention to the fact that the perfect victory of the Lord over the king of terrors will be manifest only at the end of the ages. Understand me: I do not mean to assert that the victory which the Lord celebrated on the third day over death and the grave was unreal or imperfect, or that He does not already in the fullest sense of the word merit the title of "Prince of Life." It is true that where sin and the law have lost their power, the bitterness of death is taken away, and death itself is to our faith only like the husbandman who goes forth to gather in the ripe sheaves into the everlasting garner. Nevertheless death still remains a ruler upon the earth. But—it is the most distant future into which Paul transports us—when the end is come, and all might and power which raised itself against the King of kings is entirely destroyed, then will be brought to pass that saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." When Jesus comes, there comes a tabernacle of God with men, and all tears shall be wiped away, and death will be no more, for the former things are passed away!

2. And now a glance at the *condition of happiness which begins with this hour*. Far be it from me to detract in the slightest degree from the salvation and joy which our pious departed enjoy in the immediate presence of God and of Christ. But yet perfect blessedness will be their portion only when the trumpet shall sound, and the Lord shall come on the clouds. This view is fully confirmed by the spirit and letter of Scripture. What else does Paul mean when he says, "When Christ who is our life shall appear, *then* shall we also appear with him in glory"? Wherefore does he look for the crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give *on that day*, the day when He shall visibly appear? No, not until the coming of the Lord is the highest joy of heaven attained; just as the wedding feast does not begin until the bride-

groom personally appears. Let me express the difference between the present and the future blessedness of those who have departed in Jesus in the simple figurative language of the renowned Chrysostom:—"As a friend, who has invited to his house all his friends, takes care the feast does not begin before all the guests are present, but until then agreeably occupies those who have earlier arrived, so that they become not wearied; thus will the Lord do. His friends come not all at once into the regions of eternity, but one after another; and yet all shall at the same time partake of the full enjoyment of blessedness. In this interval will Jesus so agreeably engage His friends who are with Him, that it will not occasion them the least impatience, to wait for the day of the glorious and perfect communication of all the joy of eternity."

3. And who shall describe the glory of *the kingdom of God, which at that hour is completed?*

Already arises from this lower earth the song of praise to His honour; but this song is ever interrupted by the cry of the sick and the sighs of the dying. But then, when all His own are raised, and in glorified body are become, in their measure, like Him, then when the Prince of Life beholds nothing around Him but life and immortality, He will be able to exclaim as never before, "Father, I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." Then shall shine resplendent before His eyes, and before the eyes of the angels, millions of risen ones in thousand-fold glory. Different are they from each other, as here on earth the graceful moss-plant from the stately oak; as there in the sky the sun comes forth in his golden glory, whilst the moon sheds her silver over the blue firmament, and stars of the fifth or sixth rank are scattered among stars of the first or second magnitude. But yet are they all raised to such a degree of glory and blessedness as His love designed for them and their own degree of receptiveness and growth demands. Now can the King of the Divine

kingdom lay down the crown and sceptre He has so long with honour borne. Not as the Son of God's good pleasure, but yet as Monarch at the right hand of God, does He now become subject unto *Him* who did put all things under Him, that God may become all in all. God all in all the redeemed—our spirit grasps not this thought. But we feel that in the day of the resurrection the last and fairest pearl will be placed in the diadem of Christ, and that in tones yet unheard will the song of joy resound, of which we have here on earth learnt the first notes: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who *hath given* us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

ENGLISH MONASTICISM: ITS RISE AND INFLUENCE. BY
O'DELL TRAVERS HILL, F.R.G.S. *Jackson, Walford & Hodder*—
In no department of religious literature is the revolution in thought of the last ten or fifteen years more apparent than in that of early Church history. The inner life as well as the outer history of the early Church had always an interest for a select few; but by the great mass of the public since the Reformation it has been looked upon with indifference and associated with all that is dry and uninteresting. The reaction from this unjust estimate has been setting in silently and slowly for the last quarter of a century, and now there pervades society a strong desire to know more of Church life and thought in early times. Various have been the attempts made to meet this craving for information. Mr. Hill has furnished no mean contribution to this end, giving us a very interesting and instructive volume. It is by no means a complete history of English monasticism; nor does it pretend to be such, but merely "its rise and influence." Monasticism being something foreign to the practical English mind, Mr. Hill, as we might expect, in describing the origin of the two

principal monastic orders in England, is necessarily occupied to a great extent on the continent. Interesting monographs on St. Benedict, St. Francis, on missal painting and mediæval books, are introduced; and to give us a view of a strictly English monastery he resuscitates from the past the abbey of Glastonbury as it was in the sixteenth century, in all the plenitude of its magnificence and power. The book is characterized by the most perfect fairness throughout. Although Mr. Hill is a stout Protestant, he allows not his Protestantism to blind his eyes to what good may be sifted from the rubbish of Popish times. He seems too ready to take on trust what he finds in ancient books; but our readers can judge for themselves what value should be attached to such legendary paragraphs.

THINGS NEW AND OLD: BY JOHN SPENCER. A TREASURY OF SIMILES: BY R. CAWDRAY. *R. D. Dickinson*. This is a reprint in one large volume of two well-known and much valued books. Both works have been carefully edited; the Scripture references have been examined and verified, and in some places additional references have been given. It is impossible to give any idea of the contents of these books, there being scarcely any subject bearing upon the preacher's work on which we shall not find some illustration or suggestion, to which we are directed by most copious indexes.

THE DAILY PRAYER BOOK. BY R. VAUGHAN, D.D. *Jackson, Walford & Hodder*. We are indebted to Dr. Vaughan for meeting a felt want. Ministers are often asked by the heads of families to recommend a suitable book of prayers, and often must they have found a difficulty in directing them to one in all respects suitable. The present volume is characterized by Dr. Vaughan's usual vigour of language, depth of feeling, and soundness of sentiment; whilst variety is well

secured by each prayer being founded upon the portion of Scripture selected to be read. Those who have to lead the devotions of worshipping assemblies will find this volume useful in quickening devotional feeling, and in furnishing suitable forms of expression for common spiritual needs.

THE BIBLE STUDENT'S LIFE OF OUR LORD. BY REV. S. J. ANDREWS. *A. Strahan.* This is a useful and much needed little volume: it gives in a compressed form the latest results of modern criticism and investigation upon well-nigh every subject connected with the life of our Lord. It follows His footsteps through every journey, fixes the year, the month, and even the day of every event recorded in His history. Those who have access to the original authorities from which Mr. Andrews has gathered his materials will hail this little compendium with pleasure; while to those who have neither the time nor the opportunity of studying the more voluminous writers, it is invaluable. No better text-book could be chosen for the minister's Bible-class.

PARTING COUNSELS. A SERIES OF DISCOURSES BY THE REV. J. ALLEN. *Elliot Stock.* This book will be read with pleasure by the congregation attending St. Chrysostom's church, to whom the volume is dedicated; and for the liquidation of the debt incurred by the enlargement of the organ in the above church the profits derived from the sale of the book are devoted. Although rather wanting in vigour, the discourses are practical and most evangelical in sentiment. They are very creditable specimens of sermons on ordinary occasions.

Foreign Pulpit.

THE RUINS OF JERUSALEM.

BY M. LE PASTEUR BERSIER, OF PARIS.*

(TRANSLATED BY REV. R. S. ASHTON, B.A.)

“Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.”—NEH. ii. 17.

(Read the whole of the chapter.)

TWENTY-THREE centuries have elapsed since the facts I have just read to you occurred. The Persian empire then stretched from Egypt to India, and from the Arabian Sea to the Caucasus; Memphis and Babylon, Tyre and Sidon, which had so long swayed the world, bowed their proud heads beneath its yoke. It was the most extended sovereignty which had ever been founded on earth. In its capitals were concentrated the marvels and splendours of that old eastern civilization, whose gigantic remains still astonish our eyes.* Of all its cities, the most brilliant at that time was Susa, situated at the foot of the mountains of Media, in the region which had been called the Garden of Lilies, and where running streams, renowned for their coolness, maintained perpetual spring. There dwelt the mightiest of Cyrus' successors, Artaxerxes; and it was in his court, amidst all this magnificence, that a young Israelite had grown up, the

* This discourse was delivered in the old Walloon Church at Amsterdam, on the 18th of August, 1866, the day of the opening of the fifth General Assembly of the Evangelical Alliance.

object of favours which roused the greatest envy, to wait daily on him whom the prostrate peoples called the king of kings.

But one day Nehemiah saw some strangers arrive,—fugitives,—among whom he recognised his own brother; from them he learnt that the walls of Jerusalem were thrown down, and that its inhabitants were suffering misery and reproach. Then all was forgotten: both the privileged position which he held, and the honours which awaited him in the future. What signified to him the magnificence which environed him? The city of his fathers was desolate,—the city of David, the centre of all the memories and hopes of Israel. He groaned, he sat in the dust, he fasted, he wept at the feet of his God. By his paleness the king discovered his sufferings. “Why should not my countenance be sad when the place of my fathers’ sepulchres lieth waste?” The king was moved by these words, and Nehemiah asked to be allowed to go. His request was granted. He set off therefore, and reached Jerusalem. He had not been deceived. In vain, as it seemed, had Cyrus formerly given permission to rebuild Jerusalem. Where was Zerubbabel’s work? Where was Ezra’s work? Nothing remained. Within those half-destroyed walls dwelt a foreign population, and the unfinished temple remained in ruins. Nehemiah met with nothing but distrust in every direction. After sunset on three successive days he set out. All night long he wandered amongst the heaps of ruins, his soul filled with bitterness; then when the day dawned, his determination was formed, and he set to work. “Come,” said he to such as remained faithful, “come, let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more

a reproach." To this task he means to give his life; neither sceptical mockery, nor innumerable obstacles, nor the hatred of God's enemies will turn him from it; and through his heroic perseverance the temple will rise again, the law will be preserved, and Israel will remain a people, until the day when the walls of the external sanctuary shall fall and the sacrifices shall cease, because the Desire of all nations has come, and henceforth worship shall be offered to God in spirit and in truth in that invisible Jerusalem which is destined to embrace the whole human family.

Brethren who listen to me, Nehemiah is to serve us to-day as an example. Like him, we desire to build up the walls of Jerusalem; for us, as for him, the task is immense; the faith which gave him the victory is also now our weapon. May the God who inspired him fill us with a like zeal for His house!

I. Jerusalem, for us, is the Church. I take the word both in the extended and in the precise meaning which Scripture gives to it; the Church that is to say according to St. Paul's expression, the spiritual house of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone; the Church, that is to say according to St. Peter's expression, that building into the structure of which we must enter as lively stones, that we may be a spiritual house and holy priests; the Church, that is to say, that family whose members God alone knows, that great city of souls of which our Churches are only imperfect realizations. Not that I wish, my brethren, to lessen in our eyes the importance and value of the particular Church from which we have each drawn our life; which we all

love and cling to as we love the paternal roof, and as we respect the house in whose walls, along with the stones that compose them, is mixed the cement of old associations, sacred traditions, and domestic honour. If the house where we grew up is dearer to us than all others, how must it be with the Church, especially if, along with the treasures of the gospel, it has handed down to us models of heroic fidelity? Son of the Reformed Church of France, which would be the first in the history of modern times if the worth of Churches was measured by the amount of blood they have shed for Jesus Christ, I know what is the value of such an inheritance, and it is not I who would forget it. Let us therefore love the Church to which we belong; let us love it better than others: this is our right, this is our duty. But let us maintain as superior to it the great reality, called the universal Church, and which should be for us an object of faith. Woe to the sectarian spirit that pretends to realize, in the narrow circle in which it isolates itself, the pure and true Church, outside of which it sees nothing but error and worldliness; but woe also to the sacerdotal spirit, which, proud of the majesty of its traditions, of the antiquity of its worship, and of the rigidity of its orthodoxy, says in its turn, "I am the Church," and bestows the contemptuous name of *sectaries* on those who do not worship with it. Sectaries! ah, those alone deserve the name, who, whether in great or little Churches, whether heirs of venerable tradition or only born as yesterday, fail to recognise beyond their pale the action of the Spirit of the Lord, and think that they alone possess both the truth that enlightens and the faith that saves. Far from us, my brethren, be such a spirit. Let us recognise and hail the

universal Church wherever we meet with the faith which founded the Church, wherever hearts are united in the name of Jesus Christ, their Saviour and ours. While preserving the treasure of faith which has been entrusted to us, let us remember that the discernment of hearts belongs to God alone; thus shall we maintain amidst our differences the principle of a unity much greater than that which the middle ages realized, and which Catholicism still seeks to attain,—unity in faith, love, and hope, unity in mutual respect, unity in liberty. In this sense I have said that for us Jerusalem is the Church.

“The wall of Jerusalem is broken down,” said the fugitives to Nehemiah. Is not this the message which many voices bring to us to-day from all parts of Christendom? God keep me from uttering here a single exaggerated word of complaint or discouragement! The Church is standing, my brethren; and in the struggle through which it is passing, it will gain the victory. But, though we cannot doubt respecting the future, the present moment is a dark one, the struggle has its painful movements (*péripéties*) and its cruel uncertainty. For God’s soldiers, there are days of enthusiasm (*élan*), when, in the clear azure of the sky, there floats a banner to which all eyes are turned; when the voice that summons to the fight sounds strong and ringing; when from one heart to another there passes the ardour which multiplies the forces; when eyes as they meet shine with a joyous confidence; when, according to the beautiful image of the psalmist, the willing people are seen gathering together in the beauties of holiness. Alas! there are also days of reverse and anguish. The enemy rushes to the charge from all points of the horizon; he goes up to the destructive

assault, proud and certain of success; the breaches are multiplied; the old ramparts crumble away, and a certain dull stupor invades the defenders' camp; in the dust of the fight the darkened eyes seek in vain for the rallying flag, the trumpet gives only an uncertain sound, the voices of command are confused amid the disorder, unexpected desertions distress the most steadfast; they see in the front of the hostile ranks those who but yesterday were pressing forward at their side; they perceive these runaways pointing out to the enemy the entrance to the strongest position. Distrust is awakened; all are tempted to blame one another for the uncertainty that paralyses their efforts; each man defends by himself the position he holds, and in the general distress listens and waits for the mighty and well-known voice to speak and say, "Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem."

One of these days has come upon us, my brethren. The Protestant Church has been taken by surprise. Protected in former days by the rampart of scriptural authority raised by the Reformation, and behind which were doubtless concealed many intestine struggles, it was of one mind in rushing to the breach whenever its liberty had to be defended against Catholicism, and its faith in the God of revelation against infidelity. In our day this rampart has been entered; criticism, like a mighty and impetuous torrent, has penetrated into the position. The authenticity of the sacred books, facts, and doctrines, everything has been shaken by it; and after denying the reality of a supernatural revelation it now sees itself outrun by a philosophy, which, widening the breach it found open, destroys even the religious sentiment itself, knowing well as it does that it has accomplished nothing so long as it has not stifled in

the depths of the human soul that inner voice which calls for the help and pardon of the living God. The attack has been so universal that the Church has felt it everywhere; it has been so active, so urgent, so skilfully conducted, that the defenders, taken unawares, have often been incapable of replying. Poorly prepared to repel the arguments brought against them, poorly sustained by their science which has not always been on a par with their faith, troubled by the concessions they have been asked to make, they have fought with more ardour than understanding: some with great determination, but with little knowledge of the new requirements of the struggle; others with more intelligence, but perhaps with less power and less fitness to lead the masses. To these questions of faith have been added others: Must we, in order to save our faith, forsake the particular Church in which we were born, and which the enemy seemed on the point of invading? Must we, on the contrary, defend it even to the last portion of ground on which we can plant our feet? Painful situation, in which uncertainty has laid hold even of those who should have directed others, and in which believing people, resting on their faith, present the spectacle, frequent in history, of a battle in which the soldiers make up by their courage for the leadership which fails them! And, as in distress counsels abound, some—and they are the sons of free England—some have looked towards Catholicism and have said, “There only will be our safety;” others have said, “We are ruined by an authority which it is impossible to defend. Let us give up our old beliefs; Protestantism is the deliverance of the mind.” Thus the extreme parties have spoken, and nevertheless uncertainty and discouragement distress the minds of

many as they ask themselves how the Protestant Church will come forth from the terrible crisis through which it is passing.

I have already said, my brethren, that I believe in the happy issue of the struggle. What? The evangelical Church destined to perish? But, before it can perish, you must destroy the evangelical faith itself; you must say that the faith of the Peters and Pauls is dead, faith in Christ the Son of God, the Redeemer, faith in His work of grace, faith in the Holy Spirit who regenerates. You must say that it is dead, in presence of the thousands of souls whom it quickens, of the glorious works which it produces, of the missions which it has created and is incessantly maintaining, in presence of those mighty nations at once noble and believing, who bow the knee to God and stand erect before despotism; you must say that it is dead, though in the depth of our hearts we feel it present, though it raises heavenwards our eyes wearied with earth, though it comforts and fills us with Divine hope; you must say that it is dead, though we feel it vibrating from one soul to another in our holy gatherings, though it unites us in one impulse of love and adoration. Well, as long as two hearts shall possess it on earth, as long as they shall adore God together, there, I say, will be the Church with all the promises which sustain it, all the graces which vivify it,—the Church with its Christ assuring it of victory. *Ubi Christus, ibi Ecclesia!*

But the certainty of the future does not diminish the perils of the present moment; and if, by the grace of God, each of us possesses the faith sufficient for life and death, it is no less true that, in order to the development and triumph of the Church, it must come out of the

confusion in which it is now vainly moving ; that, in presence of all the bold deeds of its opponents, it must redouble its energies and gather together all its forces, and that those have a very blinded understanding or a very cold heart who think they can remain indifferent, when so many voices are crying to us as to Nehemiah that the wall of Jerusalem is broken down !

I have shown in what way our position reminds us of Nehemiah's times ; let us now see—II. What his example should teach us.


1. Nehemiah's *sorrow*. This is the first feature that strikes me in his history. Jerusalem is laid waste ; this is enough to prevent his soul from enjoying rest. Amidst the regal glory that surrounds him, amongst scenes of such enchantment and magnificence, he wanders wrapt in thought respecting the unfinished sanctuary, the burnt gates, and the broken walls of the holy city. Night and day he thinks about it, and thus exemplifies the beautiful words of David, " If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning !" and that other expression, still more beautiful, since Scripture applies it to the Son of God Himself, " The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."

Do you know, my brethren, the sorrow of Nehemiah ? Do you know what it is, like him, to mourn over the desolation of Jerusalem ? Our age has extolled (*préconisé*) sorrow ; its poets have sung with deep emotion the secret melancholy of the soul : but how much there is in this self-seeking sadness which analyses itself with complacent curiosity and offers to the world a spectacle of egotism, bitter pride, or worthless vanity ! Show me therefore a noble, manly, and self-forgetful sorrow ; show me a

powerful influence on the world who bear about with them its miseries and sorrows.

Its sorrows I have said, and I must add, its sins ; for this it is which strikes me in Nehemiah's affliction. He suffers, and humbles himself at the same time. Jerusalem is laid waste through the fault of chiefs who should have saved it ; and he, a stranger to their faithlessness, accuses himself : " Lord," says he, " show us mercy, for *we* have sinned."

It is easy, my brethren, to accuse the age in which we live ; it is easy to let the Church's want of success fall on our generation : nothing more common than these accusations in the mouth and from the pen of religious men ; — sonorous, declamatory, stale words, which impress no one, and which, in order to obtain a hearing, have in our day degenerated into insult. Painful to relate, in my country the most violent, scornful, and insulting polemics which I know of at the present time are employed in the service of Jesus Christ and of His Church. Is this the way to lead the present generation back to God ? Is this the spirit with which our Master desires us to be animated ? Is it thus the prophets of Israel speak when, overwhelmed beneath the burden of their people's sins, they humble themselves before God ? Here a recent fact occurs to my mind. Two months ago, five hundred bishops assembled at Rome, and laid at the feet of him whom they call Christ's vicar the homage of the Catholic world ; they had come in order to celebrate, by means of magnificent festivals and by exalting the temporal power of the papacy, the memory of the fisherman of Bethsaida who said, " I have neither gold nor silver ;" who wrote to the Churches, " I exhort the



churches, I who am an elder with them," and who has learnt from his Master that His kingdom is not of this world. In the midst of all those splendours, discourses were delivered; infidelity and the mistakes of the age were talked about; its errors, all too real, together with its most liberal aspirations, were all confounded in the same anathema; all that these leaders of the Catholic nations, speaking in presence of these mistaken people, could do was to defend their privileges, and accuse their enemies. Was that the language of Moses interceding for guilty Israel? Was it that of Nehemiah, making himself one with faithless Israel in his repentance? Was it that of Daniel, speaking of the chastised Jews, and offering to God in a noble prayer the sacrifice of his broken heart? Was it that of St. Paul, who was ready to be accursed for mistaken Israel's sake? Besides, amidst the general infidelity has the Church nothing with which to reproach itself? And, to speak only of ourselves, are we innocent as regards the prejudices, the aversion, and the wrath which Christianity excites? Have not our passions, our narrowness, our deadness of soul, and our deplorable inconsistencies contributed to form the very cloud which in so many ways hides religious truth? Are our missionaries to the heathen the only persons who have to complain that the life of nominal Christians is the worst obstacle to the progress of the truth? Ah, let us grieve like Nehemiah; but as we do so let us strike our breasts and confess with him the sins of Jerusalem.

But Nehemiah does not confine himself to mourning; he acts; and to be able to act he is willing to sacrifice everything; to the peace which he enjoys he prefers

the perils of a truceless conflict, to the brilliant future awaiting him the reproach of his people.

2. *The spirit of sacrifice.* This is the second characteristic in which he appears as an example for us : so indeed it has been with all who have sought to serve God here below. At all times we must separate ourselves from the world. To some God says, as to Abraham, "Leave your father's country;" and they set out, not knowing whither the hand of the Lord will lead them. Thus God spake to our fathers, when two centuries ago, in order to save their souls, they took the road to exile. Then, in the church where I now speak to you, in the place where you are sitting, there crowded together hundreds of those who styled themselves, according to the language of our old Bible, "the escaped out of great tribulation," noble and poor, warriors and young girls, children and old men, all fugitives and outlaws ; and as they thought of their France, they saw their temples destroyed, their homes sold, their relatives at the galleys : then also, when from this pulpit the voice of their pastors spoke of sacrifice, what eloquence was there in the mere aspect of such an assembly ! Alas, between them and us what a humiliating contrast ! Christians who desire to build up the walls of Jerusalem, where are the sacrifices you have made to our cause ? Let us count, if you please, our losses. Say, how much has the happiness of having a Saviour thus far cost you, of possessing the gospel, of believing in pardon and eternal life ? Above all, have you made the perfect, absolute, and unreserved sacrifice, by which we give ourselves to the God of the gospel with all that we possess, and that for ever,—the rich with their riches, the learned with his

science, the young with all the impulses of their heart? Where, Lord, is Thy "willing people?" Where, in this audience? Where are those who have sacrificed human glory for Thee, and who are ready to confess before this generation (who reject it) the folly, all the folly of the cross of Jesus Christ? Where are the young men who prefer Thy service, with its self-renunciation, to the plaudits of the world? Where are the young women who, in presence of a smiling world, enter resolutely upon the narrow way? Those only will be able to build up the walls of Jerusalem, who, like Nehemiah, can sacrifice everything to God.

3. Here then is Nehemiah at work; and here I see in him a new characteristic,—I mean the *greatness of his faith*; and this greatness I estimate by the slightness of his resources and by the immensity of the obstacles with which he has to contend. We have seen his arrival, and the sad nights when he wandered amidst the ruins of his fathers' city. Yet is not this the place where the Lord is to dwell for ever? Are not these the remains of the sanctuary where the glory of the Lord has so often appeared, and which is to serve as a rallying point to the nations of the earth? Are they not to bring their tribute hither? Are not their kings to bow in its sacred courts, and kiss its very dust? Prophets of ancient days, have you deceived us?

And this is not all. Twice already the attempt has been made to restore Jerusalem. Nehemiah from his childhood has heard of the astonishing edict of Cyrus, and of Zerubbabel's triumphant return; he knows the psalms of thanksgiving which were then sung by the multitude. Hardly thirteen years before, he had seen

Ezra set out amidst the same joy, the same popular emotions, the same ephemeral enthusiasm ; and now there is nothing before him but this heap of dusty stones, the remains of this desolate city, in which a few worshippers of the Most High are lost among idolaters.

Yet this is all he has to rely upon ! After so many bitter disappointments he must set to work, surrounded with a hostile population, mocked by the chiefs, hardly able to reckon on a few fainting souls whom he must sustain to the end. In this desperate situation must you not, O man of God, make use of a little worldly policy, and so gain over your opponents ? Faith alone is an unskilful adviser : if we want men to help us, we must claim their help. Such was not Nehemiah's idea. Hear his language in presence of mocking, crafty, time-serving men : " The God of heaven, he will prosper us ; but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem."

Christians of my generation, how often have I seen you full of distress when you ought to have been setting to work ! Possibly more than one person in this assembly has felt his zeal paralysed by the spectacle of the Church, by the apparent weakness of our resources compared with the immensity of our difficulties. Have you not also, like Nehemiah, spent some dark nights, in examining one after another the ruins which our age is heaping together ? Ancient beliefs, holy and venerated traditions, mingling in faint remembrance with the prayers of the cradle, with the blessings of a grey-haired ancestor, with the church bells joyously ringing in the morning of the first communion, with the solemnities of a death-bed, with the last words of a Christian mother—all this scorned and ridiculed, and held up to the laughter of

the crowd ! Have you not noticed in souls once dead to you the gradual breaking down of the hopes and consolations of the gospel ? have you not heard, from lips which once prayed like yours, the cold negations of a pitiless criticism ? Formerly there stood before these souls the living Christ in His holy majesty, with the words of eternal life ; now there is nothing in the vague and legendary distance but the fugitive and uncertain figure of the sage of Nazareth. Formerly, as they looked towards heaven, they heard the song of worlds praising God the Creator ; now they can perceive nothing but the fatal evolutions of an eternal mechanism. Formerly there was a Providence, without whose permission not a sparrow falls to the ground, and by whom our tears are counted ; now man stands alone in presence of the icy immensities of a space where God is not. Formerly, the smile of the first dawn resting upon the cradle of Eden enhanced the joys of man, still in his purity ; now matter begets life, and in the depths of the primitive forests is heard the stupid chuckle of the first man, crawling on the ground and scarcely delivered from the bonds of animality. Once there was eternal life, a word of victory and hope at the grave ; now the soul decomposes, along with the body, in the dust of the coffin. Ah ! in presence of such ruins, I can understand that your hearts shudder ; and when you are told, “ This is what the young believe, this is what they hail with enthusiasm,” I can understand the exclamation, “ On this moving, crumbling foundation how can we possibly lay the stones and build ? ” Thus, on one side, the greatness of the ruins ; on the other, as with Nehemiah, our predecessors’ want of success. Zerubbabel and Ezra have put their

hands to the work before us. Have we not seen, in a time of religious revival, a generation stronger and more believing than ours offer the gospel to the men of the world? What have they obtained? Where are the results? Where are their conquests? The gospel, is it not known? Has not modern criticism dissected it with its incisive scalpel? What authority can it have for those who look upon it as nothing but the simple and touching chronicle of the childhood of a religion which has had its day? In short, what are we that we should set ourselves to the work? Where are our resources, our talents, our energies? Where amongst us are the men of mark to lead or restrain? and, in the absence of individuals, where is the uniting impulse to bind the divided forces together? Can we conquer, when we can hardly live? can we raise others, when we can hardly stand ourselves?

Thus our cowardice speaks; thus we reason in our evil moments. Then the wisdom of the world draws near and says, "You are attempting an impossible task. You will not lead the men of this day back to beliefs which they have left behind. You will not build up Jerusalem; and, besides, why should you build it up? Why separate yourselves from the age? Why isolate yourselves within your ramparts? Come to us, and let us form an alliance, and we will receive you; for you have consolations for suffering souls such as we do not possess; you shall speak to children and to the people the language they want to hear. There are sublime pages in your gospel; but give up your legends, your doctrines, your Christ the Son of God, before whom we are not willing to bow the knee; give us the religion of free thought: at this price we will protect you, and modern

society will give the dying Church a shelter which will prolong its days!"

We have all heard this language; the form may vary, but the thought is the same. Now, to such as speak thus here is my answer. You wish to protect the Church, you wish to shelter it in its tottering old age; and the only condition you ask is that it should cease to be Christian! Well, let it die. But let it at least die noble and proud, for it has the right to do so; let it die with its Christ, whose spouse it is; let it die clinging to the cross, at the foot of which it was born, as it received the baptism of redeeming blood; there let it die, rather than that it should come, faithless and degraded, to beg for your protection on condition of denying its faith. Yes, let it die in the majesty of its independence. Degrade it not; for it is your mother. It has produced the modern world; and from it you have drunk in, along with the spiritual milk, all the goodness you possess.

But no! You know well it cannot die, and you yourselves do not believe in its death; and besides, you cannot dispense with it. Yes, you may talk of its decrepitude; but there are days when its youth astonishes and confounds you. Ah, that which dies is what you wish to put in its place:—the deism of the last century, which alone seemed worthy of modern reason, and whose inheritance no great thinker of the present day will stoop to pick up; religious pantheism, which the common sense of the west will not accept; positivism, which pretends to imprison man beneath the brazen vault of tangible realities, and shut against him for ever all possibility of escape towards the ideal and the absolute; and all the successive systems whose noisy popularity

is only equalled by the void into which they will soon disappear.

Like Nehemiah therefore let us not lose courage. Like Nehemiah, we would answer those who wish to form an alliance with us, while they ask us to sacrifice our faith for their sakes, "The God of heaven will give us success ; but as for you, you have neither part, nor lot, nor memorial in Jerusalem !"

Like Nehemiah also, we have beheld the ruins which our age has heaped together ; but, let us affirm it, their very greatness fills us with hope. Have you reflected upon it ? Between the living God of Christianity and the vagueness of fatalism, nothing has remained standing, not a system which holds its ground, not even enough stones to build up a portion of a wall, a simple shelter. Now humanity, my brethren, cannot live on nothing. It sins, it suffers, it dies ; it needs pardon, comfort, hope ; and if, in presence of these important questions, which may be set aside to-day but which will return to-morrow, science has to confess its total ignorance ; if to the mind which thirsts for the absolute, to the heart which thirsts for love, to the conscience which thirsts for righteousness, it answers, " Let these *rêveries* alone ; I accept only what can be touched and seen ;" if this, as it gives us to understand, is its last word, humanity will go and seek elsewhere for rest, peace, and certainty. Then may it find the Jerusalem of the living God open to receive it !

Come then, I would say to you, come, and let us build up the walls of Jerusalem, that we be no longer a reproach. To work ! in these difficult times ; to work ! in spite of failures. " O God," said a noble Christian,

“success is Thy concern ; as for me, grant me obedience.” To work then, in obedience ; to work, notwithstanding the smallness of our numbers ; to work, with our eyes fixed on the promises of the faithful God ; to work, to-day, to-morrow, and until God shall say to us, “It is enough.”

Let every one bring hither his stone, like those families of Israel whose names Nehemiah has preserved for us : some, their profound science ; others, their practical instinct and activity : some, their mighty and persuasive words ; others, their spirit of order and discernment : some their fortune, and others their poverty : some, external and visible works ; others, hidden actions : some, their strong and well-tried piety ; others, their feeble faith all mingled with obscurity : let no one despise his brother’s work. He who has only saved a small portion of truth out of the shipwreck of his opinions, let him bring it ; God will not reject it.

Thus let the walls of Jerusalem arise ; let it shine, the holy city, ornamented, according to the touching words of Scripture, like a bride adorned for her husband ; let it appear unto men, old and yet always young, built on the word of apostles and prophets, and on the Cornerstone which remains from age to age ; let it extend its borders, ever too narrow for those who wish to dwell within it ; let it stretch out the curtains of its tents ; let it remove its stakes. “Lift up thine eyes round about and see,” says Isaiah, “who are these that run to their ramparts ? Who are these who fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows ?” Some come from the distant islands, some from the north and the west ; the children of the stranger are moved, the sons of them that afflicted

thee come to it, humbled, and call it the sanctuary of the Lord. Rejoice, O earth; and ye heavens, burst forth into songs of triumph, for the Lord has visited His people. Say to the daughter of Sion, "Lo, thy God reigns, and all nations shall serve Him for ever!"

"USE SHORT SENTENCES.—The whole of my experience has gone to show that much of my success in public speaking has been the result of condensation. At the beginning of my ministry I wove sentences that covered the most of a page; but I never heard more of them. On the other hand, I often found my short sentences cropping up in the conversation of my parishioners. They are easy of remembrance; once into the memory, they live and work there for a life-time. Elaborate argument is forgotten, and brilliant declamation is recollected only as a deafening noise; but compact sentences never leave the memory. The gorgeous, or parenthetic, or cumulative style simply *won't do* for the nine hundred. Your sentences must be like bullets, and you must be sure that every one of them bangs the target right in the centre. . . . Telegrams! that is the word which best conveys my meaning. A *letter* may be opened pretty leisurely. Some calm men can even lay aside their letters until after breakfast, and then open them as if they were reluctantly keeping one of the commandments; but few men I imagine can look upon a telegram without instantly putting down the cup at the bidding of an accelerated patting of the heart. Give the nine hundred telegrams! Sentences compact as a bullet, or pointed as a spear! Don't fancy that short sentences have nothing in them. A compendious sentence may contain the elements of a wide philosophy, just as a rain-drop may contain as many elements as the deluge."—*Springdale Abbey.*

Misread Passages of Scripture.

BY THE REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

No. II.

The Dues of Cæsar and of Christ.

“Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.”—MATT. xxii. 21.

WHAT things are Cæsar’s? Clearly the things which bear his image and superscription; the things on which he has the right and the power to imprint his mark.

What things are God’s? Clearly those things which bear His immediate mark and superscription, which belong to the diviner part in man, which are in man by the breath of the Divine inspiration, and which God claims, and therefore has the right to claim directly and exclusively for Himself. The Lord will not stand between Cæsar and that which bears his image; let not Cæsar dare to stand between God and that in man which bears His image, and which He claims to rule directly by His word and by His Spirit indwelling in human hearts.

This text is constantly quoted to justify the refusal to pay to Cæsar the tax, be it church-rate or anything else, which he may demand for the support of a spiritual system, which we may not believe to be in accordance with the Divine will. I confess that the teaching of our Lord in these words seems to me to point in precisely the opposite direction. The argument which one often hears is to this effect: Cæsar is intruding into God’s province when he demands anything from us for spiritual uses; this is a department with which he has nothing whatever to do, and we are giving him that which is God’s if we yield to his claims. God alone has the right to claim anything at our hand for spiritual uses; and we are wronging Him, we are robbing the Lord of what political theologians call His “crown rights,” if we give unto

Cæsar one farthing for the maintenance of any Church system or systems, or any spiritual operations of any sort, since these are of the things which belong to God alone. The argument of our Lord in these verses points surely the other way. With Him the test of the demand is not the purpose, but the thing demanded. If what is asked has Cæsar's image on it, enough; let him have it; the responsibility of using it rests with him. If Cæsar asks that which has not his image upon it, which he cannot compel before his tribunals or distraint by his officers, such as your judgment, your conscience, and the support of your voice and your hand, obey God rather than man. If you yield to Cæsar, yield because you see that it is right in God's sight, that it is a duty to God to yield to him; if you refuse, refuse because to yield would be wrong in God's sight, and then be prepared to sustain your refusal even unto death.

Do not misunderstand the difficulty of the Jewish rulers, which was a very real one. It was a case of conscience with them. They did not care about the amount of the tribute, that was a small matter; but Cæsar was a Gentile, idolatrous prince. Idolatry was the state religion of the Roman empire. It was a bitter thought to the Jew that an idolater, one capable of setting up his own image in the holy of holies, should rule over him and exact his tribute. Was it not a betrayal of duty to God to consent to it? Was it not right to suffer any extremities rather than yield to the imperial claims? There was a party among the Jews who felt so grievously the degradation and the burden on their consciences, that they were in a chronic state of rebellion against Rome. They were always seeking to foment the differences between their own and the Roman government; and they were prepared to stake their own lives and the life of the nation on their fealty, as they understood fealty, to God alone. It was one of the questions most eagerly debated among them, which they asked the Saviour to solve. A case of conscience,—conscience grieved by being compelled

to support a system of government other than that which they believed had been ordained to them of God. Our Lord's solution is most original and striking; and it offers the clearest guidance to us through the multitude of kindred perplexities which cannot fail to arise by reason of the ever varying relations of the secular and spiritual powers in every age of the world. (Matt. xxii. 15–22.) The image on the tribute money settled the matter. This is *primâ facie* evidence that Cæsar has a right to claim it. The power of putting an image on the money marks it as a thing between you and Cæsar. You accept it and use it in daily life, at Cæsar's hand. That image on the penny, the right of coining money being represented by it, is the symbol of all the order and benediction which flow to you from Cæsar's rule; and Cæsar's right to exact it back again is distinctly a question between you and the earthly monarch, into which you have no right to drag, for the purpose of protest, the name of God. Cæsar is ordained of God to take visible charge of this department, the order of civil society; and he and you must settle between you the fair adjustment of his claims. A piece of money bearing Cæsar's image is no battleground for the rights of God. Pay whatever Cæsar asks for his purposes, no matter what they may be, so long as by using Cæsar's mintage you give the stamp of your acquiescence to his rule; and if his purposes seem to you to be wrong, fight him with nobler things than pennies—with voice and pen, the free utterance of opinion, and, if needs must be, in the last extremity, with swords.

If Cæsar asks your homage to his idol, the bending of your knee, or the acclamation of your voice, the answer is clear,—Thy image and superscription are not here; my knee is for my God, my voice is for my God; and all the powers of the universe cannot bend the one or awaken the other without my will. Here I follow the Divine precedent: "Nebuchadnezzar spake," etc. (Dan. iii. 14–18.) But if Cæsar asks my pennies for any purpose which he comprehends within the aim of his government, let him have

; they clearly belong to his sphere. I scorn to hold what his force can wring from me the next moment; are his, the responsibility of taking them is his, and responsibility of using them is his. If I am not satisfied with his use of them, I have nobler means of exerting my power and influence; or, in the last extremity, I can go out from his empire and have done with him and his empire for ever.

This is the principle on which it seems to me right to act in church-rate matters. Suppose that one were living in a neighbourhood in which the church of the district had been built under a special act of parliament, and was paid for by a rate levied on the householders during a certain number of years. It would be our duty to pay year after year our share of the tax which parliament imposed. The money asked for has Cæsar's image and superscription on it: by using it we consent to Cæsar's sway. We have no right to pick and choose which claims of a government we will honour, and which we will refuse. We must get the good of the government as a whole, and pay its claims as a whole, always endeavouring by all means to secure that the adjustment shall be equitable and fair. And so it may become a clear duty to pay for the building of a church which we do not enter, and whose minister regards our ministry as an unauthorized and mischievous intrusion on his sacred domain. If the Church, by Cæsar's ministry, will have tribute money, we say, Take it; and if the demand is very harsh or peremptory, we say, Take it, in very good faith. But God forbid that we should ever consent to belong to a Church which can condescend to take tribute money by force of the unwilling, and which gives the adversary thereby such strong temptation to blasphemy. Such seems to me to be the bearing of this principle on this and kindred questions. It seems to me distinctly to enjoin on us the course which it is constantly quoted as denouncing. The money Cæsar needs, for the carrying on of his government in the best way he can, is the first

charge on the property which the order of civil society suffers us to possess and enjoy. God claims none till Cæsar is satisfied; for Cæsar's claim is His ordinance. Having satisfied Cæsar, take counsel with Him about the rest.

But these reflections open up many, some of them perplexing, questions, on which this seems to me a good opportunity to offer some brief remark.

1. Does not Christ in this place seem to recognise some divided allegiance—man under two masters, owing duty to Cæsar, owing duty to God? Will he not be puzzled perpetually to determine their limits, and to settle what is secular and what is sacred? and is there not something repugnant to the very essence of Christianity in the idea that man at any moment, in any relation, can have to do with another being than God? Is not God the sole Lord of his being and of his life? What can be Cæsar's, in contradistinction to that which is God's? I think I have learnt from the Scripture, and I am always preaching the doctrine, that God claims the man in his wholeness; that body, soul, and spirit, riches, knowledge, power, and love, all belong to Him; that there is but one empire, one service, one King; that life is simple, simple as the infinite God. "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind, and strength,*" "*and him only shalt thou serve.*" "*This do, and thou shalt live.*" What claim can Cæsar have on man then, which is not also God's claim? What tribute can one pay to Cæsar which is not also paid to God? None, absolutely none. The Lord recognises no divided allegiance; His words rightly understood are in perfect harmony with the doctrine of His own sole and supreme lordship over every thought, every passion, and every possession of man. "*Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's.*" Why? Who ordains it? Who has the right to demand it? God. Within the sphere of Cæsar's government, obey him, not because Cæsar can force you, but because God will have you; make it a part of your Divine obedience,

to obey wisely and loyally as a subject and a citizen; and consider that Cæsar claims your service within the sphere which belongs to him, as the ordained minister and representative of God. There is no secular and sacred since Christ appeared. It is all sacred. Civil obedience is an ordinance of the Church. The Scripture bears most explicit witness to these principles wherever it touches on the relations of civil society and its institutions. (1 Pet. ii. 13-17; Rom. xiii. 1-7; 1 Tim. ii. 1-4.) It is God's institution. He sustains it; He, through the ruler, claims your tribute; the result, the order and progress of society, is His work. Innocent III. was right, though in a sense of which he little dreamed. The moon has its own relation to the earth; but they have a common relation to the sun. The moon's orbit is included in the earth's orbit; but the sun sways and balances both of them, and there is not a movement of the moon in obeying the inferior earthly attraction which is not also an act of obedience to the superior sphere. So God has set us under rulers, in societies, as a kind of interior province of His kingdom; but our loyalty as subjects, our duty as citizens, are alike part of the one duty which we owe to God. There is no schism in the body of our service, no double authority in our Lord's realm. The two worlds, the two services, the two spheres, are one in Christ. "*One is your Master, even Christ.*" "*Thou shalt worship him, and him only shalt thou serve.*"

2. It is needful to inquire how far this principle of obedience is to carry us.

If the money has Cæsar's image and superscription, let him have it; he has a right to it, and in recognising that right we are fulfilling so far our duty to God. Here is a clear and simple principle: but is it a sufficient guidance; does it provide for all the possible exigencies of social and political life? How about the right of resisting Cæsar, when he rules unrighteously? How about John Hampden's refusal of the ship-money, and the grand and glorious struggle which it inaugurated, by which our

liberties were won ? This is a very grave and important question, and one which, having voluntarily selected such a subject as this, we have no right to pass by. There is a Divine precedent here. (1 Kings xii. 12-24.) What is it which is ordained of God in government ? Not any particular king, nor any particular form or institution, but the good of men in the order of civil society. This it is at which God aims, and to this end kings and institutions are His ministers. The king or institution which may best assure this end is the open question in the settlement of which God demands the concert and co-operation of mankind. Every king, every magistrate, every political institution, has a certain Divine sanction, inasmuch as it is the keystone of the arch which He has built, and under whose sheltering dome we live and work. But a keystone which, instead of securing the arch, threatens its stability, has no Divine sanction longer than for the time during which it can be successfully replaced or repaired. The Divine shield is cast, not around the particular king, but around the society and the civilization of which he is the head. It is only in the unity of the society that the Lord's sanction upholds him ; let him mar that unity or distract it, and God passes to the side of those who are seeking to set up a new and real keystone in his room. There is nothing like the duty of passive obedience to tyrants implied in the text, or enjoined in the word of God. "*Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's,*" while Cæsar is the recognised lord. In those crises of history in which Cæsar has to be weighed in the balance, in which the question has to be tried, Who is king and by what rule shall he reign, godly men have to keep clear before the mind's eye what God means by human society, what He aims at, and to help Him, yes, help Him to secure it. If no Cæsar be worth recognising, or Cæsar be altogether too bad to be borne, then refuse his tribute, resist his myrmidons, draw the sword of the Lord and of Gideon to strike for deliverance. The Lord is the Cæsar

of such an hour; the Captain of the Lord's host, His sword drawn in His hand as at Jericho, is in these times of revolution busy among men. They best honour Cæsar and serve Christ in such hours, who have the clearest eye for the good of the commonwealth, and who prepare the way for the reign of a Cæsar who, like David, shall rule according to the will of God. The sacred sense of the obligations of a subject or a citizen which those cherish, who have learnt from Christ "by whom kings reign and princes decree judgment," and who know that obedience to the powers that be is a form of obedience to God, makes them patient, beyond the measure of mere political patience, of the weaknesses, follies, and sins of the men who occupy the world's high places; while it makes them stern and firm as death when God has pronounced the sentence of deposition, and has bared the avenging sword and committed it to their hands. These are the men who, like Cromwell, do their work with a terrible force and completeness, and who read lessons in God's name to Cæsars, which remain doctrinal through all time.

3. Surely our Saviour intends us to understand how little money, or anything with Cæsar's image and superscription upon it, can do to make or to mar the fortunes of God's kingdom, which spreads and rules like the dawn, like the moisture in the south wind, like the blush of spring, like the splendour of summer, like everything that is quickened by the breath of God. Tribute! We are always perplexing ourselves about tribute—a steady stream of regular contributions, a flood-tide of golden gifts. It is our measure of power. Quite other is Christ's. His power flashes like lightning from one part under heaven, and shineth to the other part which is under heaven. The world flashes into light, glows into life in a moment, when the times of refreshing, of quickening, come down from God. Men catch it from each other's eyes, each other's lips. It spreads as flame, and gathers strength as it widens its circuit. Money, social and political influence, the force of this world, all

that seems solid and potent to men while they are enacting the masque of life which we call living, faint back like rushlights in the lightning's flash, like aged institutions in the hour of revolution, when the breath of the Spirit as at Pentecost is falling on the world. I speak, and I am quite sure the sacred writers spoke, in no scorn of money. No *thing* is base: we keep our hate, our scorn, for base spirits, not for things. But for money Paul must have starved, and the kingdom must have perished in its birth. What the Lord means us to understand is that money is the inevitable satellite of higher things. Spirits in earnest movement sweep it with them in their course, as the earth sweeps its atmosphere. Give us hearts of fire, fire that kindles and flashes from heart to heart, from peak to peak of the human; and what work will wait long for gold? Men who in common levels of interest dole out their tens and hundreds, and feel some dull glow of satisfaction stirring the stagnation of their hearts, scatter forth their thousands when God fires their spirits, and their whole being is alive and thrills with joy. Money! nothing greatly spiritual was ever made by money, or was ever marred by money in this world.

There is a touch of scorn in the Saviour's words, "*Shew me the tribute money.*" Scorn of the vain worldly mind that was perplexing itself about tribute, while the love of God and the belief in judgment were fast dying out of human hearts. One sacred conviction in their hearts would have answered the question, and lifted them above the sphere of tribute—as Paul was lifted—into the region of that kingdom which would sweep Cæsar's as a satellite in its sphere. Did the Lord foresee sadly the scene from which a few dark days divided them, when they would yield to Cæsar—these men, who were groaning and haggling over the tribute—absolutely everything that was God's? (John xix. 7-16.)

The leader of the band who turned the world upside down witnessed this confession, "*Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ*

of Nazareth, rise up and walk." They were poor as beggars, but richer in power to draw forth the treasures of this world than kings. What king's command could have wrought this miracle? "*And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.*" (Acts iv. 32.) In truth this love of Christ is the universal solvent. Nothing remains any man's own when once the heart is touched by this Divine fire. It melts all selfish separations and appropriations, as sun-warmth the bonds of winter, and quickens in the universal human heart the glow and circulation of the spring. Nothing starves in summer for want of the bread that perishes; supplies lie thick everywhere around. And no Divine work stays for lack of the gold that perishes, when once the sun of the Divine love has loosed men's hearts from the winter of their isolation and selfish grasping care. Don't worry about the tribute. "*Trust in the Lord, and do good,*" and things will right themselves at once. Tribute will pour into the treasury, and even the exactors shall become ministers and yield their willing aid. "*Thine officers shall become peace, and thine exactors righteousness.*" "*Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers.*" "*Violence shall be no more heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders,*" if the King is in thy palaces; if thy heart, soul, and hand are loyally devoted to Christ. I often think, in these days of grand Christian institutions, with their vast fixed incomes and endowments, and all the magnificent apparatus without which it seems to us the Lord's kingdom must perish out of this land and out of the world, of the little company who trudged wearily about the highways of Palestine, seeking their morning meal from the fig-tree by the wayside, and lodging wherever a poor cottager's faith and love gave them shelter for a night, and who,—beggars as to the things which were Cæsar's, but filled as never men were filled before or

since with the things which were God's, faith, hope, joy, truth, wisdom, and Divine charity,—went forth in this their might and re-made society: the grandest revolution in the history of this universe, accomplished by its beggars, and, as the world thought, its fools. And the fact repeats itself in every revolution. Let a man in any age go forth with the fire of God in him; and the force he wields, the mastery he wins, the new life he quickens in a nation, in a world, pours silent contempt on gold. The gold is gathered, as spirit gathers flesh about it and becomes incarnate; so all that belongs to Cæsar's sphere is at the commandment of that which comes straight from God's and glows with the inspiration of His life. Gifts of a splendid lavishness in such seasons are abundant; and strangely enough the givers feel enriched unspeakably by the joy of giving, enlarged immeasurably by impoverishment, and increased by abnegation. The richest in such seasons are those who give most, not those who have most. A wonderful sense of the glorious wealth of a heart which has a guest-chamber for Christ, and whose pulses beat joyously as the free tide of the Divine love flows through and over it on all around, kindles men's souls to a new conception of riches. It fills the beatitudes with a wonderful meaning, and shows the sorrows and straits of poverty overflowed by the riches and joys of God.

Christian Life.

BY THE REV. J. C. JACKSON.

"To me to live is Christ."—PHIL. i. 21.

A FEW words, a glance of the eye, or the tone of the voice, sometimes give an insight into the depths of a man's heart. The narrow rent in the clouds unveils the far distant stars in the sky; and the fervent word reveals the secrets of the heart. The small shaft sunk into the earth exposes to view the strata of the rocks, and gives a better idea of the structure and composition of the surrounding country, than can be obtained by a wide survey of its variegated surface, clothed with vegetable productions; and a few earnest sincere words give a deeper knowledge of character than can be gained by a wide but superficial view of conduct. Such spontaneous vehement utterances are like springs issuing from a great depth, which tell us the quality and condition of waters stored up in dark subterranean reservoirs.

The words of our text give us an insight into the apostle's heart, and open to view the fundamental principle of Christian life. They indicate:—I. Entire renunciation of self. II. Absolute devotedness to Christ.

I. *Entire self-renunciation.* Every form of evil may be traced to one source, selfishness. It is the life of ungodliness; it is the principle, of which all kinds of moral evil are the expressions. The temptation under which our common parents fell cannot be considered a slight or trivial test of character by any one who seriously reflects on the nature of man's heart. That temptation was addressed to the deepest principle of man's nature, and in it the devil with equal skill and boldness attacked no remote outwork of the city's defences, but the very citadel of the soul. Independence of God, the self-satisfied condition of gods, was the allurements with which he

urged man's original fatal act of disobedience, and aroused that feeling in the heart which is the fruitful source of all sin. "Ye shall be as gods" was the assurance by which he induced our common parents to eat

"the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world and all our woe."

And from the moment the desire to be as gods, independent of their Creator and self-sufficient, arose in their mind, the character of the heart was changed, the centre of life was altered, and human nature was alienated from God and essentially depraved. They became gods to themselves, and all their powers and possessions became instruments of self-idolatry. And Adam begat a son in his own image, in whom that selfishness, which separated him from God, also alienated him from his fellow-man. You may have felt some surprise at the sudden growth of wickedness, which in the second man produced what we consider the maturest fruit of sin, and may have been disposed to contrast the smallness of Adam's offence with the enormity of the crime which his first-born son committed. But there is really no occasion for surprise, for both are in principle identical; the exclusion of God from His throne, and the removal of a brother out of the way, are equally the natural results of supreme selfishness. Observation of the world and experience of our own hearts show this evil principle to be still the essential characteristic of unregenerated humanity. It is the mainspring of activity, and the grand motive of exertion. We find it prompting honest labour as well as disreputable effort, and stimulating absorbing interest in honourable business as well as crime and vicious indulgence. It is, I believe, the one principle of evil which presents itself in life in innumerable forms and colours, just as the same waters reflect from their surface the rocks, the forests, the green hills, and the great cities past which they flow from the river's mountain cradle to the sea.

Our text brings before us a man delivered from the power of this evil principle, separated from the mass of men by the suppression of that selfishness which reigns in human nature, one who can say in truth "The aim of my life is not to advance my personal interests, is not to increase my wealth, is not to gratify my appetites, to satisfy my ambition, or exalt whatever is connected with myself. Life to me is not self-worship. A great purpose I have in life, to which myself and all I have are freely subordinated; and though all that a man hath will he give for his life, yet for that purpose I count not my life dear to myself." His declaration sets him apart as a man different from others, and his conduct confirms the truth of his declaration. The hopes of a successful pupil of the schools, the prospects of a rising favourite of the rulers, the honour of a zealous Israelite, the pleasure of a life of learning and honourable exertion he resigned: more than all, the pride of self-righteousness, that self-esteem which lingers in the breast of the most degraded, excusing vices which all others condemn and seeing virtues which no other can perceive, but which flourishes most vigorously in the heart of the respectable Pharisee, was broken and withered in his heart; and what things were gain to him, these his conduct proved he now counted but loss. And all these things he resigned, not with the lingering looking-back of Lot's wife toward Sodom, not with the secret regret which in conscientious men, forsaking what they dare not retain, proves they still cherish a regard for them, but cheerfully and entirely. Having first renounced self, he could easily resign whatever was valuable only as a means of self-gratification. Was it because ill health, old age, or bitter experience had destroyed the world's attractive power, that he so willingly renounced its aims and glory? Or was it because Christian principle quenches the ardour of human passions and freezes the heart into the hardness of stoical indifference? Very far from that: it was while in the vigour of health and life, with the world's brightest

prospects opening like the morning's light before him, that he renounced the world. His powers were not enfeebled, and his affections were not quenched by his self-sacrifice, but rendered more tender, ardent, and influential. The current of his life was not frozen; but the spirit of Christian faith, like the breath of spring setting free the congealed waters, caused it to flow with the strength and fulness of a flooded river. He had not lost his interest in the world; but that interest was ennobled and immeasurably strengthened. The light of natural life was not extinguished: but, like starlight at daybreak, it was merged in the stronger beams of the rising sun. A man does not lose all aim in life by becoming a Christian, but acquires the most influential of all aims. He is not simply unclothed, but clothed upon, and renounces self only by receiving the fulness of Christ.

II. *The Christian's devotedness to Christ.* "To me to live is Christ." He felt himself to be no longer his own, because he had given himself to his Saviour. "To me to live is Christ." The aim and single purpose of my life is to please Christ, to honour Christ, to serve Christ. I have read regarding one of the most celebrated actors in the terrible scenes of the first French Revolution, that his inordinate vanity caused him to cover the walls of his room with mirrors and busts of himself, so that wherever he looked he saw his own likeness; and so men, in the selfishness of their nature, love to surround themselves with objects which gratify their selfishness, and to worship self as seen reflected in the interests, families, acquirements, and possessions which belong to themselves. The human heart is thus a temple, in which the soul has enthroned and worships images of self. The apostle's heart was cleansed from idols, and instead of self Christ was enthroned in his soul. Tender as his affection was to friends and relatives, far more tender and devoted was his love to his Saviour. Far above his regard for his ease, honour, or wealth, was his devotedness to Him for whom he cheerfully suffered the loss of

all things ; and deep beyond his natural love of life was his love to Him who died for us, and for whose cause he at last suffered a martyr's death. In him Christ was the subject of constant thought ; at Christ's name his heart beat with strong emotion ; Christ's people were his chosen friends ; Christ's service his pleasant work ; even suffering for Christ he counted cause of gladness. His first thought was not, what is my interest, but what is the Lord's ? not, what shall be pleasant to me, but what shall please Him ? A faint resemblance to his devotion to Christ may sometimes be seen in the love which men have to their friends. In the self-sacrifice of that mother who wrapped her scanty clothes, during a snow-storm, round her infant, and saved her child's life at the expense of her own, we find an example of that intense affection which, directed in the apostle's case toward the Saviour, prompted him to say, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha." He was a man of one great thought, of one grand aim, of a ruling passion, which, instead of extinguishing natural affection and leading to the neglect of social duty, enforced every duty and received into itself every affection, which it sanctified, like the living tree, which, without destroying, absorbs into itself the elements, and moulds them as leaves and branches into conformity to itself. He looked to Christ till he was transformed into His likeness, and the love of Christ was so woven into the web of his life that even by death the obliteration from it of Christ's name was impossible. (Rom. viii. 28.)

This spirit of devotion to Christ is vital Christianity. It is not an enthusiastic state of excitement, but a rational, becoming, and necessary condition of a pious mind. The Christian's aim justifies and demands this earnestness ; and Jesus Christ, to whom he lives, is worthy of the heart's homage and the life's service. He is worthy of heart and life service :—1. Because He is a Divine Person, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. To make any person or thing lower than God the lord of

the heart, and the motive of life, is idolatry. Pointing to a rude print of the first Napoleon on the wall of his cottage, a French peasant exclaimed in presence of a colporteur, "See, there is the only god I worship;" and the high expressions of admiration of great men, or hero-worship, if sincere and not simply extravagant profession, would be an elevation of the creature into the place of the Creator. But the supreme regard toward Christ, which is inculcated in Scripture and exhibited by the noblest of men, while it proves His Divinity and could have no place in any system which denies that truth, is at once justified and demanded by the glorious and infinitely exalted nature of the Saviour. Who is worthy of the worship of the heart, and the service of immortal souls, but Jesus Christ, "who is God over all blessed for ever?" and who that has beheld His glory, the glory of the "only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," can withhold the sincere fervent homage of the heart? Before Him the heavenly hosts bow, and when God brought His Son into the world, He said, "Let all the angels worship him." Join then the heavenly hosts in offering the tribute of praise:

"Come saints, and adore Him; Come bow at His feet:
Oh give Him the glory, The praise that is meet;
Let joyful hosannas Unceasing arise,
And join the full chorus That gladdens the skies."

Christ is worthy,—2. Because He is a Divine Saviour, and has done and suffered for us more than our gratitude and service can ever repay: yet should the sincerity of our love bear some proportion to the depth of His, and the zeal of our service to the greatness of the service He has rendered us. How deeply sunk in selfishness and darkness must be our hearts, if Christ's love awakes no emotion nor penetrates their gloom! Ah, cold must that heart be which cannot feel the warmth of the Saviour's love; and dried up must be the fountain of tears in the eye which does not weep at the sight of the Saviour's

sorrows. When you look in faith on the cross, and see the Saviour bleeding, broken-hearted, and dying for you, does not His love constrain you to devote your life to Him, and make your hearts respond to the Christian poet's burning words—

“Thou my all,
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth! my world,
My light in darkness, and my life in death;
My boast through time, bliss through eternity—
Eternity too short to speak Thy praise,
Or fathom Thy profound of love to man;
To man of men the meanest, even to me,
My sacrifice! my God!”

May the Spirit of God take of the things of Christ, and show them to you, that the sight of His excellency may draw you to Him, who shall then become the life of your heart and the aim of your life; and so when Christ who is your life shall appear, you shall “appear with him in glory.”

SPEAKING TO THE CROWD.—“Let me advise you not to attempt to paint too *minutely* on the platform. Remember that you are painting for a crowd; for a crowd too with naked eyes, and eyes untrained to discover the subtle graces of high art. In all education always begin with capitals. A camel's-hair brush is of no use on the platform. I tell you, sir, that a new broom (anything of the besom genus) is infinitely better for platform painting than the finest brush you could find in the studio of the finest artist. You might borrow Raphael's brush; but can you borrow Raphael's *hand*? Shakspeare found a Hamlet in *his* inkhorn; other men have dipped their pens in the same inkhorn, and brought up nothing but common ink. Allow me to say that you must not trouble yourself too deeply about delicate neutral tints; you must use bucketsful of vermillion, dash the ‘loud colours’ on with liberality, and the less enlightened of the nine hundred will scream with delight. Oratory in huge buildings owes a good deal to vermillion and indigo, though it would often shirk a handsome avowal of the vulgar obligation.”—*Springdale Abbey*.

The Gospel according to Mark.

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. H. J. GODWIN.

BOOK I.

Introduction, and Ministry in Galilee.

PART II. Div. I. (*Continued.*)

Sec. IV. **"** And directly going out from the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. **"** Now the mother of Simon's wife was laid down suffering from fever; and they directly speak to Him respecting her. **"** And coming near He raised her, taking hold of her hand. And the fever left her directly, and she ministered to them.

Sec. IV. This cure is also related by St. Luke as immediately following the cure in the synagogue. It is the third of the bodily cures which form the first group of miracles in the Gospel of St. Matthew. It is connected there with the many miracles of the next section, but not with the preceding. St. Luke describes the fever as great, and also states that the disciples spoke to Jesus concerning the sick person, the mother of the mistress of the house. (Mark i. 29-31; Matt. viii. 14, 15; Luke iv. 38, 39.)

" St. Matthew describes the house as Peter's; St. Luke as Simon's; only St. Mark gives the names of the other disciples. St. Matthew says He touched her hand; St. Luke, standing over her, He rebuked the fever.

A service belongs to the synagogue, and a service to the house.

The afflicted should receive sympathy and succour, and return kindness and help.

“ But evening being come, when the sun set, they brought unto Him all those who were diseased, and those subject to demons. “ And the whole town was gathered together at the door. “ And He cured many afflicted with various diseases, and cast out many demons : and He did not suffer the demons to speak, because they knew Him. Sec. Many miracles

“ And rising up early, it being still night, He went out, and went away to a solitary place, and was there Sec. Depart from Capernaum

SEC. V. The miracle at the morning service of the synagogue was soon known throughout the town ; and when the close of the sabbath left them free, the people brought many sick persons to the house in which Jesus was. He touched and healed all. (Mark i. 32-34 ; Matt. viii. 16, 17 ; Luke iv. 40, 41.)

“ Other miracles had been performed in Capernaum during the weeks of our Lord's residence there. (Luke iv. 23.) But these were less known, and had not produced the popular excitement which followed the cure of the demoniac in the synagogue. With the many cures of the evening after this memorable day, St. Matthew associates the prophecy which declares the sympathy of the Saviour with the sufferers ; and he thus makes the cure of diseases a part of the salvation of Christ, and a symbol of the removal of sins.

Christ's power was sufficient for the removal of all human ill.

The help of evil is not requisite for what is good.

SEC. VI. Partly it may be on account of the popular excitement occasioned by the events of the previous day, and partly for the extension of His ministry to other towns, our Lord now leaves Capernaum for a while. He withdrew first to a solitary place for prayer. Peter and other disciples, and subsequently some of the people, follow Him, and request that He would stay longer with them. But He gives a reason for His departure, and begins His first journey in Galilee, preaching and performing miracles. The residence in Capernaum seems to have been only for a short time. (Mark i. 35-39 ; Matt. iv. 23-25 ; Luke iv. 42-44.)

praying. ³⁶ And Simon, and they who were with him, hastened after Him; ³⁷ and finding Him, they said to Him, All are seeking Thee. ³⁸ And He said to them, Let us go to the neighbouring country towns, that there also I may preach; because for this I have come out. ³⁹ And He was preaching in their synagogues in all Galilee, and casting out the demons.

10. VII.
re of a
per,

⁴⁰ And a leper comes to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down to Him, and saying to Him, If Thou art

³⁸ In St. Luke's narrative the people also are said to have come after Him; and in reply to their request, the general purpose of His mission is declared. But the answer to Peter refers to the departure from the town just mentioned, ver. 35.

Christ withdrew from the crowd, and rose early for prayer.

He left one place, that He might do good in other places.

Sec. VII. The application of a leper to Jesus is here narrated: the expression of his humility and faith; the manifestation to him of the Saviour's compassion and power; the direction given to him; and his contrary conduct, with its consequences. According to St. Matthew, this event occurred when our Lord descended from the mountain, after the discourse recorded in chaps. v., vi., vii. St. Luke says that it was in some town. By all the evangelists it is given in connection with the first journey. The many points of agreement prove the identity of the event recorded by them. The cure of leprosy was more extraordinary than that of other diseases, and produced a greater impression on the people. (Mark i. 40-45; Matt. viii. 1-4; Luke v. 12-16.)

⁴⁰ The words of the leper do not indicate distrust of the Saviour's compassion, but only doubt respecting the extension to such cases as his of that healing power which he recognised as Divine, and therefore knew to be all-sufficient; but which was exercised only according to a purpose and plan very imperfectly known by him. Probably no other leper had been cured,

willing, Thou art able to make me clean. ⁴¹ And Jesus in compassion, stretching out the hand, touched him, and said to him, I am willing. Be made clean. ⁴² And when He spoke, directly the leprosy went away from him, and he was made clean. ⁴³ And speaking earnestly to him, He directly sent him away; ⁴⁴ and said to him, See thou tell nothing to any one; but go away, show thyself to the priest, and offer, on account of thy cleansing, what Moses appointed for a testimony to them. ⁴⁵ But the man going away began to publish in many places, and to spread abroad the report; so that He could no longer go into a town openly; but He was without in solitary places, and they came to Him from every quarter.

⁴¹ The commands of Christ were delivered as the expressions of His own will, and His miracles were in like manner the exercise of His own power. He did not, as prophets and apostles, simply declare the will and works of God. He declared His own will; but He also ever directed the attention of men to One above, by whom He was sent, and whose honour alone He sought. God spoke by Him, and His will was the human manifestation of the Divine will. "The words which I speak to you, I speak not from myself; but the Father who dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (John xiv. 10).

⁴⁴ The offering is described Lev. xiv. 4, 10, 21. The law of Moses respecting leprosy was both sanitary and symbolical. It could not well be the latter, unless it were also the former. The acceptance of the offering by the priest was his official testimony to all, respecting the complete cessation of the disease. In this case it is not likely that the reality of the cure would be questioned by any; the direction given was to secure the proper observance of law, and to prevent an undesirable popular excitement.

Faith knows the sufficiency of the Divine power, when not sure of its exercise.

Christ is willing and able to cure all who in faith come to Him.

Div. II. *Opposition of Scribes and Pharisees.* (II.—III. 6.)

Sec. I.
 lon &
 e of a
 lytic.

¹AND again He entered into Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in a house. ²And directly

Marvels and material benefits do not always conduce to spiritual good.

Law should be observed, and right feelings be subject to rule.

[Of the first journey, the sermon on the mount and the cure of the leper are the only particulars recorded. The general statements of the evangelists refer to a subsequent time, as well as to this period. As Galilee was about the size of some English counties, and only a part was now visited, the journey would not require more than a few weeks.

In this first view of the ministry in Galilee there are statements of the Divine power and goodness manifested in Jesus, the Son of God; and of the favourable and beneficial influence of His ministry on the minds of men. Other effects will appear in the next division.]

Div. II. (Chap. ii.—iii. 6.) In the preceding division there is an account of the beginning of the ministry in Galilee,—the words and works of Jesus, and the favourable impression made upon the people. In this division the narrative is continued, and now the opposition of scribes and Pharisees is set forth. The agreement in character of all the following sections, and their contrast to all the preceding, prove that the arrangement here is not simply chronological. The events related followed one another, but not immediately. The first shows the opposition raised when Jesus claimed to forgive sins; the second, the fault found in Him for associating with sinners; the third, the censure passed on His disciples for neglecting the strict observance of the sabbath; and the fourth, the conspiracy against His life for working a miracle on the sabbath day. The arrangement of St. Luke is similar, the purpose being the same. That of St. Matthew is different, the first event being the last of his second group of miracles, and the conversations introducing the third; while the other events belong to the part which presents the effects of the ministry of Christ.

Sec. I. (Mark i. 14; Matt. ix. 2–9; Luke v. 17–28.) Having returned to Capernaum, Jesus was teaching in a house where many were assembled. The room or court was filled, and a crowd stood before the door preventing

many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door: and He was speaking the Word to them.

³ And men came to Him bearing a paralytic, carried by four. ⁴ And not being able to approach Him on account of the crowd, they removed the covering where He was, and breaking through, let down the mattress upon which the paralytic was laid. ⁵ But Jesus seeing their faith, said to the paralytic, My child, thy sins are forgiven thee.

access. Under these circumstances the friends who were bringing a sick man to be cured carried him up to the roof, and let him down before Jesus. Instead of healing the sick, the Saviour gave him the assurance of Divine forgiveness. This aroused the anger of His adversaries, and in their hearts they charged Him with blasphemy. To vindicate the authority claimed, He first showed His knowledge of what was passing in their minds, and then cured the disease of the man whose forgiveness He had declared. The paralytic is immediately restored, and the people join with him in praising God. From the crowded house Jesus went to the shore of the lake, and there again taught the people. Passing by the custom-office, He called Matthew to be an attendant, as before four other disciples.

¹ The time required by the first journey is not stated, but it was probably short. The side of the lake being mentioned in the account of the second journey, the first was probably in the central and western parts of Galilee.

² St. Luke says that Pharisees and teachers of the law were present, from all Galilee, Judæa, and Jerusalem. The word spoken to them was the gospel of the kingdom (i. 14; Luke i. 2).

⁴ St. Luke relates that they went on to the roof, and let down the sick through the tiles. This might be done in an upper room; but it is more likely that the crowd would be in the court, and that the covering removed was over a part of this. The roof was often accessible from the outside (xii. 15).

⁵ The faith seen was that of the paralytic and his friends. The name used expresses affection (x. 24); and the declaration made was both the most desirable and probably the most desired. There is no reason for supposing that this sickness was the consequence of some special sin. All suffering may be in some way connected with sin; but it is not all on account of sin. (Luke xiii. 2; John ix. 3.)

‘Now there were some of the scribes seated there, and reasoning in their minds, ‘Why does this man thus speak blasphemies? Who is able to forgive sins but One—God?’ And Jesus directly fully knowing in His spirit that thus they were reasoning with themselves, said to them, Why are you arguing these things in your minds? ‘Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, Thy sins are forgiven thee,—or to say, Arise, and carry thy mattress, and walk about?’ ‘But that you may see, that the Son of Man has authority on the earth to forgive sins,—He says to the paralytic,—“I say to thee, arise, and

‘They were right in believing that the forgiveness of sins could come from God only; but they were wrong in supposing that this forgiveness was not to be *declared and imparted* by One, appointed and empowered to forgive sins. Jesus claimed this authority; and He communicated a measure of it to the apostles and other disciples. He said of all His works, that they were done in the Father’s name. (John v. 43; xiv. 10.) Forgiveness is a release from the consequences of sin; but only some of these—those that are not moral and spiritual—can be removed without a change of character. Full forgiveness, with men and with God, includes a change of judgment, affection, and conduct. Jesus, knowing the hearts of men, could fully and certainly declare the favour of God to the penitent, and thus confirm and make effective the purposes which Divine goodness had already produced. He did not say that He forgave sins as God, but as the Son of Man, who received this authority. Forgiveness is also declared by men, but only because God has forgiven. “Whatever you shall loose on the earth will have been loosed in heaven.” (Matt. xviii. 18; John v. 27, xx. 23; 2 Cor. ii. 10; Jas. v. 15.)

‘Any one could say either of these things; and only by the power of God could either be said *effectively*. The visible was the proof of the invisible; not the less of the greater.

‘The term “Son of Man” is one of the titles of the Messiah. (Dan. vii. 13.) It is often used by our Lord, but not by the disciples. He is thus described as the Head of humanity, the Leader and Lord of all men, through whom the Divine purpose will be realized in the salvation and glory of the sons of God. (Rom. viii. 29.)

carry thy mattress, and go away to thy house. ¹³ And he arose directly, and carrying the mattress went out before all; so that all were amazed, and glorified God saying Never did we see it thus.

¹³ And He went out again by the lake; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them. ¹⁴ And passing by He saw Levi, the son of Alpheus, seated at the custom-office: and He said to him, Follow Me. And he rising up followed Him.

¹⁵ And it happened when He was reclining in his house, many tax-gatherers also and wicked men were reclining

Sec. I
Conversations in
Matthew's house.

¹³ St. Matthew says that the people praised God, who gave such authority to men.

¹⁴ The name of Levi is also given by St. Luke. St. Matthew gives in his narrative the name by which he was best known subsequently. Several of the apostles had two names. That Levi and Matthew are names of the same person, appears from many correspondences in the narratives. The previous occupation is the same; the call is the same, in time, place, manner, and result; the feast is the same, the guests and spectators, the questions and answers.

Difficulties are for the exercise, expression, and increase of faith.

The assurance of forgiveness is for the health of the sinner.

Jesus could see men's thoughts, and forgive their sins. His miracles were attestations of Divine authority.

Sec. II. (Mark ii. 15-22; Matt. ix. 10-17; Luke v. 29-39.) These conversations are related by all the evangelists immediately after the call of St. Matthew, but it is not said that they followed immediately. They are by St. Matthew explicitly connected in time with a subsequent event,—the application of Jairus, Matt. ix. 18. The object of the host was probably to bring his former associates to the knowledge of Christ, and to

with Jesus and His disciples ; for there were many, and they followed Him. ¹⁶ And the scribes and the Pharisees seeing Him eating with the tax-gatherers and wicked men, said to His disciples, Why is it that He eats and drinks with tax-gatherers and wicked men ? ¹⁷ And

declare to them the change which had taken place in himself ; and therefore there must have been some interval between the call and the entertainment. They are, however, most naturally associated, the latter being a consequence of the former. A further reason for the connection appears in the narratives of St. Mark and St. Luke ; for this section continues their account of the opposition of the Pharisees, and in the narrative of St. Matthew it forms one of the didactic sections interposed between the three groups of miracles which are collected in chaps. viii., ix.—On the return of Jesus from the district of Gadara, after the second journey, a large entertainment was given by the tax-gatherer who had been called to be an apostle. There were present in the house, with Jesus and the disciples, many other guests and some spectators who would not share in the feast. Of these, the Pharisees proposed a question to the disciples, respecting the conduct of their Master ; and the disciples of John proposed a question to Jesus, respecting the practice of His disciples. He replied to both inquiries. In answer to the first, He referred to an analogy which showed the propriety of His conduct, and then declared the object which He sought. In answer to the second, He described the present condition of His disciples, and then referred to analogies, supplied by the entertainment, which showed the impropriety of the practice proposed for their adoption. These conversations are given in the same connection by all the evangelists ; and there is no reason for separating them from the entertainment. They certainly were occasioned by it, and they are related as spoken at the same time.

¹⁵ St. Luke says that Levi made a large entertainment ; many are here said to have been attracted to Jesus, as well as invited by the host. The feast was in public, and those who were not invited guests came into the room or court, as on other occasions.

¹⁶ The Pharisees are mentioned by all the evangelists. They would not sit down with persons of this class, and were offended because Jesus not only did this but had selected one to be an apostle.

¹⁷ There were righteous persons, according to the language of both the Old Testament and the New : vi. 20 ; Luke i. 6 ; John i. 48. It was not needful that Jesus should call them to repentance. They were already thus prepared to receive Him. But others also were the objects of His love, and the com-

Jesus hearing it, said to them, The strong have not need of a physician, but they who are ill. I did not come to call upright, but wicked men to repentance.

¹⁸ And the disciples of John, and those of the Pharisees, were wont to fast. And they come and say to Him, Wherefore do the disciples of John, and those of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples fast not? ¹⁹ And Jesus said to them, Are the bride-men, while the bridegroom is with them, able to fast? Such time as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. ²⁰ But days will come, when the bridegroom shall be removed from them; and then they will fast in those days. ²¹ No one sews a piece of undressed cloth upon an old garment; otherwise the filling up takes away from it,—the new from the old,—and a worse rent is made. ²² And no one puts fresh wine

passion of the Good Shepherd was especially for those who were still astray. The words for “to repentance,” are found in most MSS., though wanting in some. They might be introduced from St. Luke’s statement, where they are unquestionably genuine; or they may have been left out, as apparently superfluous or unsuitable. They are wanting in only a few MSS. of St. Matthew, and there are several similar omissions. St. Matthew gives as part of this first reply the reference to Hos. vi. 6.

¹⁸ St. Luke gives the two conversations, without distinguishing the speakers, having before mentioned scribes as well as Pharisees.

¹⁹ Christ is described as the Bridegroom of the Church, John iii. 29, Eph. v. 25.

²⁰ The days referred to came in a few months, John xvi. 20. The statement does not imply that there would be fasting in all those days. The plural has been needlessly changed into the singular, to prevent this supposition.

²¹ It is not said that the old garment was broken. There was merely something which might be called a rent, for which a few stitches might be a more suitable remedy.

²² Wine was kept in leathern vessels, and many such were there for present use; the old wine, which was the best, being in old skins. St. Luke adds to this reply the statement, that no one would prefer new wine to old. The

into old skins ; otherwise, the fresh wine rends the skins, and the wine is poured out, and the skins are spoilt : but fresh wine is to be put into new skins.

old skins are not said to be broken, unless when fresh wine is put in them. As old skins they would be proved, and therefore, for old wine, be better than new. The occasion of these two parables, and the expressions contained in them, will guide to their interpretation. The general lesson, that things should be suited to one another,—actions to sentiments, appearances to realities, what is done to what is wanted—is evident ; but the parts of the parables have been applied differently. Both similitudes teach the same lesson : they were spoken to show the impropriety of what the scribes proposed for the disciples of Jesus. The manifest unsuitableness and hurtfulness, on the one side, point to a corresponding unsuitableness and hurtfulness on the other. Christian doctrine could not be compared to a piece of undressed cloth, nor to fresh wine ; but the asceticism recommended was like these things, sometimes hurtful and never very useful. Fasting, and not Christian doctrine, is the subject of discourse. A most gentle courteousness, and a perfect appropriateness, both to scene and subject, appear in this reply to an unseasonable question.

Social entertainments are not unsuitable to the highest and best.

Bad companionship—from sympathy is wrong, from benevolence right.

Christians have times of favour and joy,—of privation and sorrow.

Ascetic rules suit only novices, and are not the old way, nor the best.

Outlines.

Fear versus Power.

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear ; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”—2 TIM. i. 7.

THESE words were addressed to one who had been well instructed in early life. Both mother and grandmother had been noted for their faith and holiness. And the influence of their holy lives and pious instructions had shown itself upon Timothy in childhood and later years. He had need however, like all others, of being put in remembrance of what he had learned. When the fire is burning dull and low, “stirring up” is followed often with better results than would be the putting on of new coal. The Christian life has need of fresh coal, of truths which perhaps no one communicated before ; but it has need of being reminded of truths often heard before, perhaps on a mother’s knee, by a father’s side, in the Sunday-school, or learnt through that most thorough of all schoolmistresses, experience.

The reason why the apostle puts his son Timothy in remembrance is that “God hath not given us the spirit of fear.” Religion is not a subject to be afraid of, and therefore to be avoided. We have

I. The negative statement, “God hath not given us the spirit of fear.”

All men who are without God are full of vague fears. These arise from consciousness of sin—“’tis conscience that makes cowards of us all.” The gospel, with its message of love and truth, allays all such fears. Wherever God is hidden from the heart there is fear. (1) Look at the heathen ; all their rites and sacrifices are the offspring of fear. (2) Where superstition veils God, as in the delusions of Rome, there fear lodges. (3) Where there is darkness or ignorance there is fear. (4)

Where there is want of faith there is fear: it is want of faith that makes Christians fear for the safety or triumph of God's truth; the apostle never betrays fear for the ultimate triumph of the cross; he boasts of its power and success, never expresses doubt or fear for its safety. God is not honoured by expressions of fear for His truth (Uzzah's fear for the ark: 2 Sam. vi. 6, 7).

II. He replaces the spirit of fear with

1. The spirit of *power*. Fear is the enemy of power. It takes away power from us in many ways. (a) Destroys self-possession, which is in itself a power. (b) Takes away the power of expression; fearlessness is essential to speaking with power. (c) Fear weakens the stoutest heart, paralyses the strongest arm; the general, in leading a company to some feat of daring, has sometimes bidden those return who were afraid, knowing well that remaining with timid hearts, their presence would be weakness.

When God takes away fear He takes away the source of weakness, and gives confidence, the source of power. How many the illustrations of God becoming in the weak power over self, over sin, over enchaining habits of vice.

2. *Love*. This is the secret of His power. God does not, in taking away fear, leave the mind vacant. That would be to leave it a prey to the evil one. To shut out fear for ever from the heart, He fills it with the spirit of love, and nothing chases away fear like love. "Perfect love casts out fear." The spirit of love is the spirit of power.

3. *A sound mind*. Power accompanied with an unsound mind is the cause of terrible evil; even love unaccompanied with sound judgment may lead to much evil: God gives, along with power and love, soundness of mind.

Not that He bestows intellect where it is deficient, but the tendency of God's truth when accepted is to enlarge the mind. Where God's Spirit dwells there are more correct views of the world and the value at which it should be held; much of the mist of passion which sur-

rounds the natural man is cleared away. Natural therefore is it that such should act with sounder judgment than he who is out of harmony with God.

Especially is this the case when we view this gift of God in connection with the chasing away of fear. When the soul is filled with fear nothing is judged of calmly. The world and everything in it is distorted. "It fancies clouds where no clouds be." The fear which the sinner has of God prevents his seeing His beauty and excellence. He that is trembling lest the lightning shall strike him is not the one best fitted to observe the grandeur of the storm.

D. LONGWILL.

God's Love in the Heart.

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."—ROM. v. 5.

THESE words stand at the end of a list of blessings which come to the Christian simply by his faith. See context, ver. 1-5.

"The love of God" spoken of in the text is God's love to us, not our love to God. In chap. viii. 39 it is called "the love of God in Jesus Christ." Similarly is it described in the context, ver. 6-8. This love the text declares is "shed abroad" in the believer's heart "by the Holy Ghost which is given unto" him.

Inquire how or in what particulars this is so.

I. Because the Holy Ghost is given to believers on the exercise of their faith to work this work within them.

For Christ, by His atoning work, procured the Holy Spirit for men. And, as a matter of fact, the great gift was bestowed, poured forth, on the day of Pentecost; and it has been continually poured forth ever since, and is poured forth to-day, and will be till the end of the dispensation. And the believer, coming to God in Christ, accepts the atoning work of the Saviour by his faith, and so receives this benefit of it. Hence, such texts of

Scripture as Acts ii. 38; Eph. i. 13, 14; etc. And we know by our experience that this great gift is given to us.

II. It is the work of the Holy Ghost thus given *to open to us the love of God.*

Nothing but the Holy Ghost can disclose to us the love of God at the first. Nothing else does. Hence so many read and hear of the love of God, and yet do not apprehend it. But the Holy Spirit, coming to the believer as described, "takes of the things of Christ," and therein shows to him the love of the Father. See John xvi. 13, 14. The Holy Spirit shows thus the *wonderfulness*, the *extent*, heights, depths, lengths, breadths of the love of God in Christ, and its *unchangeableness*. See context, ver. 6-8 and chap. viii. 35-39.

III. The Holy Ghost thus given carries the love of God *beyond our mere intellect into our inmost nature.*

We are more than intellect. In our best nature we are "heart." To this the Holy Spirit can penetrate—no other power like it, and can pervade, and fill, and possess the whole with the wonderful, infinite love of God in Christ. Every faculty and power of holy emotion in the soul can thus be moved and stirred; and fresh faculty and power of holy emotion can thus be given. Thus the love of God is "*shed abroad*" or *poured forth* "*in our hearts.*" So oil poured into a vessel, whatever the character of the vessel, finds its way into every part, and even permeates through the vessel itself. So incense shed forth in a room fills every part of it with its fragrance, which often extends beyond. So the breath we breathe from the fresh morning air penetrates in its effects to our very flesh and blood and bones, and is seen in the glow of our health, in the lightness of our step, and in the flash and brightness of the eye.

Do we know this love of God? and is it "*shed abroad in our hearts*"? If so, then *to what extent* do we know it?

Broadway.

JOHN BENNETT.

The Comprehensiveness of the Divine Provision.

“The eyes of all wait upon thee,” etc.—Ps. cxlv. 15, 16.

BOTH man and beast are dependent upon the Divine bounty. Mere instinct, although not incapable of gratitude, is not responsible to God for its manifestation. The human soul is under obligation to avow its recognition of Divine goodness by an habitual outpouring of devout thankfulness. A redeemed world, rich in the possession of providential favours, should be vocal with praise. Those who possess a spiritual appreciation of Christ's redemptive work will correctly, although inadequately, estimate the great truth inculcated in our text. God's provision for the world is—

I. UNIVERSAL IN ITS EXTENT. “The eyes of *all* wait upon thee.”

II. SUITABLE IN ITS SUPPLY. “Thou givest them their meat in *due season*.”

III. COMMUNICATED WITH INFINITE EASE. “Thou *openest thine hand*.”

IV. CONTRIBUTES TO THE SATISFACTION OF ITS RECIPIENTS. “And *satisfiest* the desire of every living thing.”

Ash next Sandwich.

J. B. D.

Seeking the Dead ; finding the Living.

“Why weepest thou ? ”—JOHN xx. 13–16.

THIS incident suggests—

I. That we should seek not a *dead*, but a *living* Christ. One of the chief purposes of the resurrection was to show us that Jesus is not dead but liveth. It is a mistake to suppose that the only or chief object of it was to compel men to believe that Jesus was the Christ. Sufficient evidence of His being the Christ was given in His teaching and works.

The disciples were now thinking of their Lord only as dead and mouldering in the grave, and in persistently

seeking a dead Lord lay Mary's mistake and the cause of her tears. Events had happened that should have turned her sorrow into joy. And true is it that many of us continue in sorrow and gloom from this same cause, seeking a dead instead of a living Saviour. How many have no conception of Christ but one belonging only to the past. It is not such a Saviour that will wipe away our tears.

II. If we seek earnestly and with tears, like Mary, we shall, like her, find the living Saviour. The empty grave had failed to impress Mary with the truth that He had risen; but the Lord Himself comes to her, and opens her eyes. Addressing her in His old and gentle tone, the familiar word *Mary*, she immediately recognises Him: "his sheep know his voice." How often has this been the experience of men and women of all ages. We have words spoken to us so comforting and loving that we feel they must be from the Lord. The Lord has spoken with us often before; but in our unbelief we thought it was but accident or chance, or we thought it was the Book, or, like Mary, it was merely a *man* speaking to us, "the gardener," the preacher. The reason religion has so little power in gladdening the heart is that we do not realize that He whom we are seeking is not yonder, but here, by our side, a living Friend and Helper.

D. LONGWILL.

The Duty of the Strong to the Weak.

"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak."—
ROM. xv. 1.

I. THE strong here are the strong *in faith*—the enlightened. Those who had correct views respecting the liberty and spirituality of the gospel were to bear with the prejudices of their weaker brethren.

In this aspect the words have still their force for us. Religious doubts and crotchets we have always with us; although, having relation to things that are comparatively new, they vary with circumstances and fashions.

The words are true also in a much wider sense.

II. We who are strong *physically* ought to bear the infirmities of the weak. The robust should help to bear what is a burden to the delicate. The healthy ought to relieve the tedium and smoothe the pillow of the sick. The young should help the aged. The rich should help the poor. The infirmities of the weak we are as it were to put on our own shoulders, and bear, for those who are tottering under them.

III. The strong *in mind* ought to bear the infirmities of temper of the weak.

Some are irritable, soon made peevish, easily roused to anger. We who are differently constituted—less sensitive, who can be calm under annoyance, slight, and opposition—ought to bear with the weaknesses of those who are possessed of a less happy disposition. Do not lose patience with their touchiness. Bear from them much in kindness. Remember that they are *weak*. Loss of temper is often a sign of weakness. (One losing in a game becomes irritable, one having the worse of an argument often loses temper.)

Enforced by the fact:—1. We are all constituted differently one from another. *All have infirmities*; but the infirmities of one differ from the infirmities of another. If each sought to please his neighbour, to bear his infirmities, one another's weaknesses would become bonds of union.

2. The example of our Lord: "Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification, *for even Christ pleased not himself.*" Though rich, yet for our sakes He became poor. He emptied Himself of His glory, of His strength, that He might bear our infirmities. How remarkable was His forbearance with His disciples. This was one of His greatest trials. And bearing the infirmities of weaker brethren will be to the Christian always the most trying exercise of self-denial. But shall any one grow weary when he remembers that "Christ pleased not Himself"?

Thou who wishest to be considered strong, show thy strength in the true, manly, Christ-like way of bearing the infirmities of the weak (Josh. xvii. 15). (a) Thou art strong in muscle and sinew; then help those who are delicate and weak. (b) Thou art strong in nerve; then step before the trembling, and give courage to those who are shaking with fear. (c) Thou art strong in intellect; you can smile at popular error. But it is no mark of strength to laugh at others' weakness; show thy strength by instructing the ignorant, guiding the erring. (d) Thou art strong in faith. Help others to realize by thy strength of faith the things unseen. Whatever be the nature of your strength, you deserve to be considered strong only by helping the weak. In God's sight, the more strength you have the more you will have to answer for at the judgment day.

D. LONGWILL.

LAMPS, PITCHERS, AND TRUMPETS: Lectures delivered to Students for the Ministry on the Vocation of the Preacher. By EDWIN PAXTON HOOD, Brighton. *Jackson, Walford & Hodder*. Few have minds more versatile than the talented author of this book: there seems to be no subject he cannot handle well. The volume before us bears this characteristic of his mind. We have the subject of preaching discoursed on, and illustrated by quotations and anecdotes drawn from every quarter. We have directions respecting the "mental tools" necessary for the pulpit, the formation of style, and the use of the imagination in the pulpit. We have monographs on the most conspicuous preachers, of various ages, from the Apostle Paul down through the early and middle ages and the Puritan times to the living celebrities of the present day. The style, although in some parts betraying marks of haste, is charmingly colloquial throughout. What adds considerably to the value of the book are its copious indexes. Without these the book would be still a most interesting volume for perusal; but it would be of little value as a book of reference. Its four indexes give to the volume, with its

miscellaneous contents, all the convenience of a dictionary of anecdote and quotation of pulpit literature.

PAUL GERHARDT'S SPIRITUAL SONGS, translated by JOHN KELLY. *A. Strahan*. Several of these stimulating and refreshing songs have been long familiar to our readers. The present translation of a large and judicious selection will be hailed with pleasure by the English reader. Mr. Kelly, in seeking to be true to the words of the original, has perhaps lost somewhat of its spirit. The songs are prefaced by an interesting biographical sketch of Paul Gerhardt's life.

SPRINGDALE ABBEY: Extracts from the Diaries and Letters of an English Preacher. *Longmans, Green & Co.* This book is of the *genus* novel; being however of the *species* ministerial, it has been considered suitable for a notice in the *Pulpit Analyst*. It is written evidently by a dissenting minister under the assumed character of a clergyman of the Church. In form it is widely different, however, from George Macdonald's "Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood." The inmate of Springdale Abbey does not sustain well the character of the clergyman; we have often, in reading the book, the uncomfortable feeling that he is betraying himself. We miss too the high tone and the deep sympathy which characterize the writings of the Modern Apostle of Christian Love. But there is a rugged power displayed by the author of "Springdale Abbey," which marks him as a man of no ordinary ability. His exaggerations, notwithstanding his reference to them in the preface as "intentional," we cannot but think are for the most part blemishes: there is no power that equals that of truth and nature. The volume abounds with many useful hints on preaching and pastoral work. It is written in a vigorous and interesting style, specimens of which we give in pages 81 and 89 of this number.

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR BOOK, 1868: containing a Summary, of Christian Work, and the results of Missionary Effort throughout the world. *Jackson, Walford & Hodder*. This is the second year's issue of an annual publication which the multiplicity of Christian societies and the magnitude of Missionary effort have made a necessity to all in official position, and a valuable guide to all who are called upon to give information upon, or to contribute aid to, our Christian institutions. This volume has evidently been prepared with

great care, and is the result of a large correspondence with secretaries in all parts of the world. It is replete with reliable information upon all Christian denominations, as well as upon some *not* Christian, as statistics upon the Jews and Mohammedans are carefully given. The imperfections inseparably associated with the first issue of such a publication are in this second issue effectually avoided, and the whole volume is arranged according to a new and improved plan. As the success of such a publication is dependent upon a large circulation, the price has been reduced to HALF-A-CROWN.

DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR CHILDREN. BY MRS. G. W. HINSDALE. *A. Strahan*. An interesting little book of prayers for the use of children, written with simplicity and full of true devotional feeling.

THE HIVE. *Elliot Stock*. This is a new enterprise, intended to supply Sunday-school teachers with hints for teaching classes and material for composing addresses.

THE SCATTERED NATION. *Elliot Stock*. This is a magazine edited, with great ability, by Dr. Schwartz. It is full of interesting matter respecting the Jews, for whom it is specially written.

THE BRITISH QUARTERLY REVIEW. The number for January is one of special interest. It opens with a very judicious and appreciative article on George Macdonald and his works. Among the articles having special interest for our readers, may be mentioned an able and exhaustive one on the English Prayer-Book, a short paper on the present position of the Church of England, and an able discussion on Utilitarianism.

THE HOMILIST. *R. D. Dickinson*. This is the nearest, in form and substance, to our own publication, of all the children of the press. The January number is full of matter calculated to aid the preacher. The publishers of the *Analyst* took no small pains, in arranging for this year, to make it as widely different from the *Homilist* as possible, consistent with its usefulness. They therefore regret that the two publications last month should in appearance be so similar. There is ample room for both publications; and we heartily wish our older friend a continuance of the influence for good it has so long exerted.

St. Paul's Episode on Love.

PART II.

Teaching, Knowledge, and Faith, nothing without Love.

“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing.”—1 Cor. xiii. 2.

In the verse preceding the apostle states that the gift of tongues without the grace of love is useless. Here he passes on to notice the worthlessness of other and higher gifts, if exercised without the all-essential love.

I. *Prophecy.* “Though I have the gift of prophecy . . . and have not love, I am nothing.”

The primary signification of the word prophecy, foretelling the future, by this time came to bear a more general meaning, and to include the instruction and warnings of religious teachers, of whatever nature they might be. In this passage the word may be used in its more general sense, and therefore may be regarded as somewhat equivalent to our *preaching*.

The preacher has still in a certain degree to treat of the future. Not only are there prophecies which it is his duty to study and to explain, but he has also repeatedly, in lifting up his voice against prevailing sins, to predict the certain coming of their blighting effects upon all connected with them, the ruin they occasion to body and soul. He has often to cheer the weary, downcast Christian by reminding him of the glory that is to follow. As the prophet of old, by strength of faith and by the

Spirit of God, was enabled boldly to warn and powerfully to encourage the Jewish people of old ; so, by the same Spirit and the same loving faith, is the teacher of the present day able to discern the times and the seasons, and to speak with truth and with power for the encouragement and warning of God's people.

But should one have this gift of prophecy or teaching to the full, and be without love, he is nothing. He would be teaching by constraint, and not willingly, perhaps from filthy lucre more than of a ready mind ; and therefore when the Chief Shepherd appeared he would not receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away.

He would be nothing too in respect to the *results of his teaching*. Teaching without love is, we often see, powerless as regards lasting and permanent impression. There are preachers who draw crowds around their pulpits, and by pre-eminence in the gift of teaching rivet the attention, awaken the emotions, and fill with delight all who listen to them ; and yet the effect passes away like "the morning cloud and the early dew."

There are teachers on the other hand, who are slow of speech, to many uninteresting as preachers, who yet, through being filled with love to God and sinners, are honoured with true success, great usefulness in the conversion of souls and the formation of manly and Christ-like characters. Their flocks grow up to revere and love them ; and love constrains where eloquence fails. What is it that gives the mother's teaching a power over all others ? Why has the teaching of home so much to do with the formation of the character ? Is it not that there the lessons are given in *love* ? Oh that the teacher in the pulpit, and the teacher in the school, sought more to ac-

company the gift of teaching with the winning influence of love, that with the eloquence of preaching there were the tears of the weeping mother over the impenitent and the wandering, that he imitated the great Teacher who spake as never man spake, and loved those He spoke to as never man loved (Matt. xxiii. 37) !

II. *Understanding mysteries, and having knowledge, without love, are useless.*

Mysteries and knowledge are often the same thing, only looked at in different stages of development, or with different degrees of enlightenment. What is mysterious loses its mystery when better known. What are mysteries in one age is knowledge in another. What is mystery to the ignorant is knowledge to the learned. Communication of thought by writing is a mystery to the savage ; communication by telegraph is still a mystery to many amongst ourselves.

Knowledge, to build up the character and to strengthen it in what is right and true, in what is holy and pure, must be mixed with love. It is not those who *know* the right that are upright, but those who *love* it (Luke xii. 47 ; Rom. ii. 13).

Understanding of mysteries, or the possession of knowledge, if without love, is learning *unapplied*. What is the knowledge of God to us if we do not love Him ? Or the knowledge of our fellow-men : what matters it that we know their checkered history, their wicked lives, their wretched experience ? Though we have all such knowledge respecting them, and do not love them, we are *nothing* to them. Unless there is love, our knowledge of them only repels us from them. But let us love them as brothers and sisters, as those for whom Christ died ; and

our knowledge of their misery and sin will open up within us the fountain of compassion, and lead us to take them by the hand and lift them up. Simon the Pharisee *knew* that the woman who came behind Jesus weeping was a sinner; but this knowledge, being unaccompanied with love, led him only to wish she were thrust away from His sight. But Jesus, besides knowing this, *loved* her. And this love led the Great Physician to apply His knowledge of the woman to her relief. *Loving the sinner*, as well as knowing that she was a sinner, He spake to her the words of hope "thy sins are forgiven, thy faith hath saved thee," and so brought peace to her troubled mind, healing to her broken heart (Luke vii. 36-50).*

Many there are like this Simon! They know that this one and that one are sinners; that a family here and a family there are living in misery, and hastening fast to ruin by sin; that an acquaintance or neighbour is the slave of vice, the prey of weakness; and yet with that knowledge they are *nothing*. This knowledge being without love never leads them to tell the sinner of Him who came to seek and save him; never brings them under the drunkard's roof, to tell the slave to vice of Him who alone can set him free, or the wretched, crushed and nigh despairing family of Him who can give hope to the fainting, sunshine to the beclouded, laughter and gladness to the weeping.

Or should our knowledge be that of the destitution and the wrongs under which our fellow-men are groaning with all such knowledge, if without love, we are nothing

* See a similar thought, with a different application, beautifully wrought out in "Ecce Deus," chap. vii.

What would John Howard have been, with all the knowledge he possessed respecting the dark and pestilential dungeons into which the prisoners were thrust and cruelly left to neglect, if with the knowledge of this misery there was not also a burning love for the sufferers? *Without love, he had been nothing.* So Buxton and Wilberforce, with the knowledge of negro wrongs, without love for the negro, had been *nothing*.

It is not otherwise with the higher knowledge. Though we have the knowledge of God's mercy, of His forbearance, of His promises, if without love, such knowledge cannot save us, cannot even be a source of joy or comfort to us. Though we have all Scripture knowledge, though we understand the mysteries of the other world, if that knowledge be cold and lifeless and loveless, as respects *the safety, the strength, the hope, and the joy of the Christian, we are nothing.*

III. *Faith* without love is useless: "and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing."

It is impossible to conceive of faith in its highest sense, that is faith as the expression of the Christian character, without love. Love is as important an element in such faith as is belief or trust. The one implies the other. We cannot have faith in God without also loving Him, and we cannot love Him without having in some degree faith in Him. It is His love that constrains us to trust in Him, and yet it is faith in that love that drew us to Him. Faith and love are like bride and bridegroom.* The bridegroom comes first to the altar, yet it was the bride

* See "Three Months' Ministry," by T. T. LYNCH, page 57.

that drew him thither. So faith comes first to the cross, but it was love that drew faith thither. And there at the cross, like bride and bridegroom at the altar, they are for ever blended together. Faith is nothing without love, like the world without the sun, like the body without the soul.

There is close connection also etymologically between the words "believe" and "love."* The *beloved* one is the one *believed* in. These two which God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. It is the separation of the life from the body; "for faith without works (i.e. without the expression of love) is dead."

But supposing, what in truth is impossible, that there could be faith without love, and that one had "all the faith in the world" (as Dr. Stanley suggests), faith in one's own powers and in God's miraculous aid, faith so strong that the mountains would remove at his bidding yet if he be without love to guide him in its exercise, he is nothing. We have need of love to guide us in the exercise of our *faith*, no less than in applying our *knowledge* and in giving power to our *teaching*.

From this passage learn the true way of becoming *something* in the world. Why so many are *cyphers*, notwithstanding the universal desire to be *something*, is that they pursue the wrong course for attaining that end; they think of self more than of others or of God. They think of obtaining their object by the cultivation of intellectual gifts, or by acquiring material wealth, and

* The same may be said also of *live*. "Our own word 'love' we have from the Teutonic *leben* to *live*, because love is the means, dispenser, and preserver of life; and without it life would have nothing *desirable*, nor indeed anything even *supportable*."—CLARKE, *in loco*.

neglect to conjoin with these gifts and possessions the grace of love. *He that saveth his life shall lose it*; he who seeks to push self *first* shall be *last*: but he who thinks of others before himself, "in honour preferring one another," shall be first. It is within the power of every one to be *something*; no one need be a cypher in God's kingdom. It is beyond thy power perhaps to rise above nothingness in the estimation of the world, thy means are slender, thy talents few, character retiring, opportunities rare; but in the sight of God being something lies in none of these, but in exercising *in love* the gift entrusted to thee.

Great will be the surprise, and great the disappointment at the final day, when the announcement shall be made who are the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; the principle on which the commendations and the rewards will then be distributed is so different from that which has prevailed in the world. Many who shall then discover that they are nothing will say, "Have I not *prophesied* in Thy name? have I not been foremost in unravelling the sacred *mysteries*, and in acquiring *knowledge*? have I not shown great *faith*, and thereby done many wonderful works?" But the reply will be, "I know you not. Though thou hadst the gift of prophecy, and didst understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and hadst all faith so as to remove mountains, yet *being without love, thou art NOTHING.*"

Bromley, Kent.

D. L.

Misread Passages of Scripture.

BY THE REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

III.

“Unto this Last.”

“I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.”—**MATT. XI. 14.**

THESE words appear at first sight to set us very decisively face to face with the sovereignty of God, in its sternest and most naked form—affirming its right to distribute its gifts and payments at its pleasure, and refusing to consider the question of equity when urged by the creature’s sharp complaint. “Take that thine is, and go thy way.” “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?” “I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.” There, it is said, and with apparent truth, is Sovereignty—pure, naked Sovereignty. The “I will” of God seems to be the sole explanation which is vouchsafed of His dispensations and decrees. But this view of the matter has always seemed to me deeply unsatisfactory. Equity is a strong instinctive principle, which God Himself has established in the judgment seat of the human conscience; and God never beats down with the bare assertion of an irresistible Sovereignty the soul that is perplexed about the equity of His ways. It is equity, pure, celestial equity, which reveals itself to those who will search for it in this parable; equity to the poor souls who had been standing all the day idle in the market place, because no man had called them to the vineyard; equity to the labourers who had borne the burden and heat of the day, and had made the dignity and culture of the Lord’s husbandmen their own. It is an equity which invites the closest criticism from those who will search it thoroughly, and which reveals to the searchers deep vital truths about man and about God.

“I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.” It is a

startling sentence. This man had been labouring in the vineyard under the burning heat, through the blazing noon; he had borne and bent under the whole burden of the work: while this one had been brought in at the eleventh hour, in the cool evenfall, and by a few minutes of light sweet labour he had won the equivalent prize. There is something startling here, and men have felt it; and they have striven in manifold and curious ways to square the method of the Master with their fundamental notions of the righteousness of God. There are theologians who feel no need to square it. According to a theology which has exercised a wide-spread and malign influence in the past, Sovereignty answers amply every difficulty, and treats our ideas of equity as a high impertinence, when they claim to weigh the ways of God. If it pleases God to make some men to be saved and other men to be damned, who shall question His rights? and if He is glorified equally by the salvation of the chosen and the damnation of the reprobate, who dares complain, or to what court can we carry the appeal? There are theologians who would have us rest calmly on the conviction that a sovereign and inscrutable will is ruling, and trouble ourselves in no wise about the equity of the decrees. But one cannot but reflect that this composed contentment with the doctrine of reprobation is mainly conspicuous in those who feel themselves safe from its trenchant stroke. With the exception of Lord Byron—to whose malign and scornful tone we believe that this was the real key—we hardly discover the disciples of the doctrine among those who believe that they are reprobate; and in the case of the theological school whose influence is happily dying away, but which survives in out-of-the-way places to an extent little dreamed of still, we may fairly entertain the question, whether, if it were flashed suddenly on their souls that they, the theologians, were doomed by the Divine decree to everlasting anguish, their rest in the inscrutable Sovereignty would be so calm, and their contentment so assured. For thinkers of this school, of course,

such a parable as this presents no sort of difficulty. A penny more or less would not be likely to stagger them, when the gift of heaven or the doom of hell raise no question as to the equity of the Divine decrees. But with the great multitude of Christian thinkers the parable has been the source of much grievous perplexity, as the manifold explanations amply prove. The question is, in which verse of the parable are we to find the key to it? "Unto this last will I give, even as unto thee," states the problem. Is the solution to be found in the body of the parable, or must we seek it outside in a general study of the ways of God?

There can be no question, I think, that the broad bearing of the parable is on the impending revolution in the visible Divine kingdom, whereby, as the Saviour says, the kingdom of God was to be taken from the Pharisees, and "given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof." I say advisedly, from the Pharisees; from the party which held the chief influence and authority in the Church. Their influence, their standing-ground, was utterly shattered by the Saviour's advent; the kingdom passed visibly, absolutely, finally, out of the rule of their hand. But there was never any question of its passing wholly from the Jews; the Jews were never to be disowned. Paul earnestly, with intense emphasis, asserts this, and makes it the basis of a long and profound argument. "I say then, hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people, which he foreknew" (Rom. xi. 1, 2). The Jews, as such, were not cast away. We think all too slightly of the strength of the Jewish element in the apostolic Church. And it is the Jews—the people, not their leaders—who are in question here. They had borne the burden and heat of the day; they had done the work—with what result, well or ill, is not the point in debate. There is no idea of their being dismissed without honour or recompense; the question

is simply concerning the bringing in of other husbandmen, the Gentile nations, at the last hour, to share in full measure in all that the Jewish workmen had won by their long and hot day's toil.

Perhaps the favourite mode of reconciling the Master's dealings with fundamental principles of equity is to be found in the suggestion, towards which some sentences in Olshausen's *Exposition* strongly lean, that the first called laboured so lazily, and the last called so strenuously that (regarding the actual amount of work accomplished), the Master's arrangements were more equitable than might at first appear. Notwithstanding the apt illustration of this which appears to be offered by the history of St. Paul, who, though the last called, "laboured more abundantly than they all," the explanation seems to me to miss the whole point of the teaching of the parable, and to proceed upon very low and worldly conceptions of the method of the Divine ways. There is no hint of such a solution in the body of the parable itself; which is a sufficiently grave objection. If this be the key, its existence is carefully suppressed, and the souls that were most sorely perplexed by the appearance of injustice are left wholly ignorant of the truth. Nay, their ignorance is confirmed by the language, or rather by the silence, of the parable. The answer to their protest on the ground that they had "borne the burden and heat of the day" would have been decisive and was ready at hand. But no hint of a justification on this ground is suffered to appear. Their assertion is allowed to pass unanswered, and must be accepted for the purposes of the parable as the truth. Whether they had wrought well or ill, though it may be the main point in other parables, is plainly not the point which is in question here. And in the interpretation of parables we get into endless difficulties, if we, so to speak, travel beyond the record, and consider the details in any other light than as the garniture of the one central idea which the parable is intended to set forth. As far as this parable is

concerned, we must accept it as a fact that they had borne the burden and heat of the day ; and no explanation of its equity can be entertained which sets that fact at nought.

That we may the better understand what it does mean, let us consider—

I. The work of the vineyard to which all were called, and in which the first called bore the burden and heat of the day.

II. The reason of the idleness of the husbandmen who at the eleventh hour were called to the work.

III. The Lord's justification of His ways.

I. The work of the vineyard.

I believe that there is nothing very definite in detail here set before our minds, and that we shall get into dire confusion if we inquire about the class or classes of members of the Church which may be signified by the husbandmen. There is no question of classes of Christian labourers, or kinds of Christian work, in the narrative. It is God's work, and these are God's workmen in the field of His visible Church, in the broadest sense which those words may bear. The vineyard is the visible field of God's tillage. The vast invisible field we are not called to consider ; except to assure ourselves that one grand principle rules, explains, and justifies God's methods with the whole. The visible field, up to the day of Pentecost, was the Jewish commonwealth, which was about to expand into the Christian commonwealth when our Lord delivered the discourses which contain our text. In the Jewish commonwealth, not priest and prophet only, but every child of Abraham was a called husbandman ; just as every Christian disciple, as much as apostle, bishop, evangelist, or deacon, is a called labourer in the wider vineyard of the Christian Church. The broad feature of the work of the vineyard is, that it is man's true, noble, God-ordained work.

It is the work for which all his organs and powers were fashioned, and in which his whole being was made to rejoice. Why were these men standing in the market-

place? What took them there? Why were they not lounging idly about the fields, or sleeping at home? Clearly because some divine instinct within them moved them thither, that they might be in the way of being hired for a day's toil. A divine instinct, I say. He little understands humanity, who imagines that the great bread and cheese question is at the bottom of even a tithe of the daily labour of mankind. It would be hard to find a man who just works enough to provide the bread and cheese and beer which he needs to sustain his animal nature, and then folds his arms and takes his ease until new hunger compels new toil. There are such men about the world, no doubt; but it is a hard matter to find them. And when they are found, men attach to such a bestial idea of life the epithet "unmanly" with a bitter emphasis, which reveals how deeply there is inwrought into the very texture of man's nature the divine instinct of work. Man is made for it, as the flower of the field is made for the free air of heaven. Shut out from it, he grows irritable and sickly, his powers droop, his courage fails, his hope dies, his life is a wreck. And very noble motive inspires well-nigh the whole of human labour. Love, pure self-denying love, love of wife, love of child, of friends, of mankind, is the moving spring of most of man's most strenuous toil. God's work, work for God, and for man for the love of God, is but the highest form or mode of human labour. Man's divine work is not something essentially different in principle from all his other work. All his best labour in his daily tasks proceeds upon the existence within him of powers and organs which can only find their highest exercise, and which can only justify their lowest exercise, in the work of the vineyard which the Lord has given us each one to do. Man is simply unmanned while he stands all the day idle in the market-place; his goodliest powers and organs are rusting, his blood trickles with dull stagnant motion through his lazy veins, his whole system is oppressed and burdened, his muscles ache for exercise, his cheek is pale,

his eye is dim. The kingly being is unbraced and dis-crowned; no joys or honours attend the *fainéant* king.

Who are the pitiable ones here? On whom shall we spend our regrets and sorrows? The hardy sunburnt workmen, who have spent their strength manfully in a brave day's work; who watch the westering sun as only the tired labourer has the right to watch him; and who settle peacefully to the workman's rest, till the gay sunlight wakes them again to new glad toils in a young, fresh, dewy world? Nay, the work of the vineyard is man's honour, joy, glory, and bliss. To be called to work in it is the crown of his manhood; to finish his work with joy is his noblest praise. But why should it not end here? If he is to be counted blessed who works in the vineyard, if his work gladdens, enriches, and ennobles him, what room is there for the thought of pay? What can the pennies in this case mean?

Man is made with a large capacity, and a large thought and hope of happiness. He can take a large blessing into his being, larger than he can meet with in his present sphere. The range of his nature takes in the infinite and the eternal. The work is noble, glorious exercise; but God only can fill and satisfy his spirit. Man needs something beyond the mere play of his powers, though their free play is an intense exhilaration and delight. He needs the fellowship of beings to satisfy the yearning, to feed the appetite, of his nobler nature; he needs the love of God, and communion with all that is of God, that he may rest and be blessed. This is the reward which the earthly day of his toil and patience will bring. The true workman is happy in his work, and sings while he toils. But God has a yet richer benediction for His children when the work is done, a blessing which will beautify and glorify life through eternity. This He gives to the workman out of His royal bounty, His own blessedness. It is His own to give; and all true workmen, whatever the measure of their work, because of the spirit of their work, shall claim it at His hand.

II. The reason of the idleness of the husbandmen who were not called till the eleventh hour to the work.

“And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us.” The true key to the parable lies here. There are many other answers conceivable. They might have said Because we like to lounge and loaf, work is irksome; or, Because we are over-tired with yesterday’s toil; or, Because the pay does not suit us, we are out on strike. Imagine that any one of these answers had been given; the whole character of the parable would have been changed, and the equity of the ways of God would then have been dark, dark indeed. But no. The men were willing to work; they were waiting to be hired; they made no bargain about their pay. “Go ye into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive,” the Master said; and they went, content to leave their wage to His justice. The men evidently cared more about the work than the pay. In truth the idlers were to be pitied. The Master pitied them, and He gave to their will the wage which lack of opportunity had forbidden them to earn before.

And this opens up some serious thoughts about the pagan world, and its relation to the kingdom of God. There is a profound, but not an impenetrable mystery hidden in the words, “the fulness of the time.” Through long ages the pagan world was left groping in the darkness, “*feeling after God if haply it might find him*,” and moaning as it grasped at phantoms in the gloom, and saw them slip from its empty hand. Looking at the anguish and misery of the world at this moment, one is constrained to confess that the Lord of the world is One who can bring Himself to look upon, and to bear the responsibility of ruling over, a terrible amount of pain. But what shall we say of the long ages of pagan darkness, when men were not *feeling* after God only, but crying for Him, shrieking to Him, were maiming their

quivering flesh and torturing their shuddering hearts, because the void only echoed back their own voices and none could tell them the Divine Name. The time is gone by when it was possible to look upon the history of heathendom as the history of one long stern effort to break away from God, to blot out His name from the universe, and to tear every trace of His image out of the life of the human world. It is now well understood that the deepest thing in heathen life and heathen literature was ever the cry after the living God, and the effort to find Him; the grandest passages in the religious records of heathendom are the words in which the founders of the great pagan systems proclaimed what they believed had been made known to them of His Being and His Will; and the gladdest, in truth the only joyous, passages in pagan history, are the records of the generations in which men persuaded themselves that God had at length visited His world. Soon the gladness vanished, overborne by wrong and lust. But while it lasted it made the solitary gleam of brightness which crosses the blackness of the pagan night. The revival of morals, of manners, and of hopes, which for a few brief generations has followed the teaching of the great masters whom paganism adores, is the one ray of heavenly light which shines in the pagan darkness, and bears witness that there is sunlight, though shining on other spheres. The joy which filled the hearts of the heathen peoples, when Sakya-Mouni, Zerdusht, Confucius, or Mahomet, proclaimed at any rate a purer faith, a nobler idea of life, than the dark, soulless, senseless formulæ in which a tyrannous priesthood had buried the Divine Name, is like some faint and far-off glow of the joy which leaped from heart to heart like flame when it was known that God had in very truth visited His people, and that the King of Glory had taken possession of His earthly throne.

Through this long sad night, lit only by these rare faint gleams, men had been looking, longing, and moaning for a deliverer; and steadily settling the while, and

they knew it, into the slough of the devil's accursed dominion, because no Almighty helper and Saviour appeared. We see their misery, their tears, their mad outbursts of passion, their foul orgies of lust; and our hearts bleed, nay there have been hearts that have burst, as they watched this tragedy of despair. And heaven heard it all, saw it all, through long ages; and still no deliverer was sent. It is a profound mystery, the millenniums through which the world was left to grope and to moan in the darkness, while the clear sunlight of God's truth was flashing its brightness so joyously on the homes of the chosen race. I say again, the mystery, though profound, is not inscrutable; for there is Calvary to expound it. In the long run, in the great day of eternity, it will be seen, that this forsaking of the heathen world was an essential part of a benign and merciful plan, of which Calvary is the centre; and that it lies in the full harmony of a love which "*endured the cross, and despised the shame,*" that a whole world might be gathered at length to the great Father's heart. But the "*no man hath hired us*" has a profound and pathetic meaning, when we search the records of pagan religious effort and aspiration, and when we see how everywhere, when the gates were flung open, the Gentiles thronged, streamed, crushed, into the kingdom of God. I find in this thought the whole mystery of the parable unfolded. The Gentiles had been looking, waiting, longing, in their own dull way, for the work of the vineyard. It was the Master's counsel, as well as their own dull hearts, which had kept them idle during the noontide heats. And it was the work which it was in their hearts to do that the Master honoured, when He made them equal to the favoured and happy husbandmen, had they but known it, who had "*borne the burden and heat of the day.*"

III. The Master's justification of His ways.

"So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they

came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen" (Matt. xx. 8-16).

These words imply—

1. That there is infinite grace, through which a certain equity shines, in the things which God has provided for all who have wrought, even though feebly and tardily, as His work. The work is honour and happiness; the want of it is shame and pain. The early labourers are the enviable; the late labourers are the pitiable. But God in His boundless grace adds a boundless gift to all: "the gift of God," which "is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." But through the grace a certain equity shines. Man was made for Life, he was born for it. To miss the glorious boon which God has the power to bestow on him through Christ, were to miss the very end and issue to which God touched his spirit. A well-nigh infinite capacity of being, loving, and enjoying, is in him which God only can satisfy and eternity only can complete. And God in His boundless love and mercy meets him in his idleness and degradation, and proposes to him a work which His grace will crown with glorious everlasting joy.

2. None shall miss the blessing through the order of the dispensations.

If the Jews were called, and the Pagans were left sad

and idle in the streets, the evenfall shall adjust the balance, the evening of earth's life, the morning of the everlasting day. Idle and sad, I say. When you are next at South Kensington Museum, place yourself before the cartoon of "Paul preaching at Athens." Mark the foremost in the group of pagan hearers; he bears in his sad wistful countenance the whole tale of Gentile waiting, longing, hoping, disappointment, despondency, and despair. Few preachers can preach such a sermon as utters itself mutely from that man's eyes and lips. This parable is Christ's answer to the mute appeal: "No man hath hired thee, poor outcast! the day spent, the soul lost! Come in, at the last hour, come in. These have wrought in a noble service the long day through. The sweat of manly toil is on their brow, the joy of a work well done is in their hearts. Come in; the sun still lacks some hour of setting. Bend thy soul to the task, put thy heart into the labour of the hour, and the same meed shall be thine. Even as unto this first, will I give unto thee; come in."

3. On a wider scale the parable is Christ's assurance, that through all outward inequalities of gift, endowment, opportunity, position, prospect, which jar this jangled world, there is a sublime equity ruling, which will right all wrongs, adjust all balances, and square all issues with pure celestial justice at last. "*No man hath hired us.*" How much does this explain of the bitterness and misery with which the world is filled! Cross purposes, cross callings, cross relationships, cross necessities, cross issues of life! Men with power in them for a service which is never asked of them; tied down to a desk or a counter, it may be, while they feel within them the stirrings of a power to guide the coursers of the sun. Men bound in a home which has no beauty for them, no love; while beyond there is a vision of the Eden which might be, if bonds could be unbound and bound afresh. Some overflowing with fatherly or motherly tenderness, in a barren home. Some shrinking from the prattle of infant

voices, yet with stuff in them of noble texture, shut up to a nursery through the prime of their days. Some longing, pining, panting for a work they love, bound to a work they loathe. Some with a genial, generous, royal nature, wrestling with the serpents of care and penury their long life through. "This is a mad world, my masters;" "the times are out of joint;" it is all out of joint everywhen and everywhere! "No man hath hired us" to the work which we are fit for; a glorious wealth of being, of power, is left to "fust in us unused."

Patience, brothers, patience! One grand work, the grandest, spreads broad and fair before you: "in your patience possess ye your souls." The hiring is in higher, wiser hands; the patience, the hope are in yours, with all their glorious eternal fruit. None of the sighing, none of the groaning, none of the desire and yearning of your spirit, is hidden from Him who made you, and who in His own good time will call you to your God-ordained work. "UNTO THIS LAST WILL I GIVE, EVEN AS UNTO THEE" reveals the sublime equity of His dealings. Await with strong patience, with steadfast hope, the things and the times of His sovereign appointment; till you find with profound and wondering joy, that your patience has won a prize whose splendour outshines the constellations, and whose bliss shall outlast eternity.

Foreign Pulpit.

THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING.

BY M. LE PASTEUR E. DE PRESSENSÉ, PH. D.

(TRANSLATED BY REV. R. S. ASHTON, B.A.)

CHAPTER I.

The Origin of Suffering.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; so also death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”—Rom. v. 12.

WHEN Job in the midst of his distress was reviewing his past prosperity, he finished the picture of his former condition, as distressing as it is splendid, with these admirable words, “I dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners.” A profound and truly sublime saying, representing as it does consolation as a royal prerogative. I know of no nobler prerogative in the moral world ; there is no power to be compared with it. History has often beheld men bound to triumphal cars, their opposition subdued, and the dominion of might established. Every day we see men compelling the admiration of their fellows by the display of their genius, or by the extent of their knowledge, and so establishing the dominion of mind. But the highest greatness consists in comforting those who mourn, in binding up broken hearts, in restoring youth and life to wasted souls, and in establishing the dominion of a love which triumphs over all our miseries. For the subjugation or humiliation of a people, violence is sufficient : savage forces, once let loose, will always prevail in this lower domain over the best organised tyranny. Nature’s free daughters, according to the poet’s expression, devouring flame or a raging sea, are mightier than an Attila to terrify and destroy. A metaphor will suffice

to dazzle the imagination, and too often a sophism will mislead the understanding; but you will not long deceive the man who is grappling with the hard realities of existence. Make him master of his pain, take away its sting, comfort him; and you have exercised the most powerful influence over him. Hence we do not hesitate to declare that if humanity has found a true comforter, capable of restoring its peace and joy, it has found its king; it has not to seek for a greater ruler. This is the decisive test of systems and religions. No mystery equals that of suffering; it overwhelms the mind, and breaks the heart. In the knot of human destiny this is the most inextricable part. To untie it, we must satisfy the mind and appease the soul; that is, we must have knowledge and power. Neither philosophy alone, nor feeling, even the noblest, can solve it. If this difficult problem has not yet forced itself upon us, it is because we have not awoken from the morning dream with which life begins. But sooner or later the illusion will be dissipated, either as regards ourselves or our friends. All along our path we meet with disease, poverty, and decrepitude; and we must ultimately acknowledge that, however brilliant the comedy may have been, its last act is always tragic. We need only to meet in the streets of our cities some mournful procession going the way of all the earth, and that will dispel our indifference. The time will come when we shall hear ascending heavenwards a general wail, the voice of humanity. And when life begins to trouble and to burden us, and we really look within upon ourselves, we shall discover that the human soul is a world still more desolate than the outer one; and, forgetting our prosperity at least for a moment, we shall hear the universal groan of an unhappy race rising far above all harmonies, whether sweet or brilliant; and then in our turn we shall ask, in all its awful solemnity, the great question which earth asks of heaven, "Why is suffering needful? Why, if there is a God on high, is His creature here below condemned to sorrow?"

Is it not a fact that we shall bestow our confidence on the man who can give us the true answer ; while from him who cannot we shall turn away ? However ingenious his theories, however well constructed his system, however eloquent his words, we shall reject him and seek elsewhere until we have found. Now as Christians we believe that we possess the solution of the problem, and we want to make every man see that we do. If we succeed in persuading you, will you not thus have the strongest possible proof in favour of our faith ? Can any one say that it is not a reasonable faith, if, while directing us to the source of the bitter stream of tears, it also has power to wipe them away ? No apology can compare with that which brings light to the mind and balm to the wounded heart ! Love's own demonstration is that which triumphs by the blessings it conveys !

We shall consider successively the Origin of Suffering, its Remedy, its End as regards the several classes of sufferers, and the Glory in which it terminates when it becomes the holy and generous suffering of martyrdom or compassion. I do not desire to linger amongst the generalities of the question. I should like at once to take my afflicted brethren by the hand, and lead them to the feet of my Master, while I say to them, " Pour forth your heart into His, listen to His tender appeals ! " But I cannot forget that the difficulties of the mind often hinder the peace of the heart. Have I not seen in the foremost ranks of the afflicted the sons of a sceptical age, urging on their way without God and without hope ? All comfort will be powerless, as long as their diseased mind is not cured. Are we not all more or less affected by this malady of doubt ? Is there not often uncertainty in our faith ? Have we no need to establish it more firmly ? What is more necessary for us all than to strengthen the shaken foundation of certainty ? May these considerations help us to do this !

I shall pass rapidly under review the several solutions of the problem of suffering which have been elaborated

beyond the pale of Christianity, in order to bring out more clearly the beauty of the one given by the gospel.

I. We meet with two solutions equally false, though diametrically opposed to one another. 1. That of the optimist, who looks upon the world with a smile, and declares that, all things considered, its blessings equal and surpass its evils, and that human life is not so sombre as it has been represented to be. If we are to believe him, life follows its natural course, sometimes a little troubled and stormy, altering its banks like a river, but always flowing between those which were appointed for it from the beginning; nothing tragical has taken place in the history of humanity, we live in the best of all possible worlds. We shall not trouble ourselves to refute such a theory: it is enough to leave its advocates to a course of life which they regard as normal; we shall wait for them at the first rock against which they will dash themselves; we shall very soon be able to triumph over their indifference. In the meanwhile they will make very few proselytes; humanity, which likes to be amused and made to forget itself amid pleasure, does not like the fact of its sufferings to be denied. Nothing exasperates and irritates it so much as these glowing but deceptive pictures of its condition. In fact, as it has been truly said, in all its myths, in all the religions which it has created, in all the poetry which it has produced, it has simply told to itself its own sad history, its great calamity, and its condemnation. "It will look upon nothing else but its old sufferings, and I am not surprised that it never grows weary of the spectacle. It loves to see and touch its wounds, even at the risk of re-opening them. This is the reason why when we seek pleasure in poetry, we are not satisfied unless we find tears in it." * In short, is it not this element which constitutes the great charm of the noble art? When your heart has been beating with generous admiration, and you have felt its holy tremor, it is because you have heard

* Ozanam, "Les Germains et les Francs," t. i., p. 214.

some echo of the great human wail, and because the poet or artist in the representation of some special suffering has reached a depth of grief which carried you to the very beginning of all our woes, to the immense calamity of a fallen race. Optimism, before being condemned by the gospel, is cursed by all the wretched, and never more so than by those who, after a brief period of delusion, at length hear the striking of that terrible hour to which every man must come.

2. At the opposite extreme of those who say that all is right, we meet with those who say that *all is wrong*; that human existence is cursed in itself; that the whole world is nothing but a hell, whose innumerable circles enclose all created beings. According to them, it is the very condition of the creature to be helplessly abandoned to evil, because good is only to be found in the Infinite and Absolute Being, and that inasmuch as we are finite beings we cannot be united to Him. Do not suppose that we are going to seek in some obscure philosophy for the foolish dreams of a recluse. These ideas lie at the foundation of one of those forms of religion which have the largest number of adherents at the present day. Buddhism is still the faith of millions of men; and Asia has no greater curse than this fatal religion, which can speak only evil of a world it is powerless to save. Buddha does not merely say, "There is misfortune in life," but "Life itself is a misfortune, and there is only one thing for man to do, and that is to deliver himself from it as soon as possible, to direct all his efforts towards annihilation or to the complete absorption of himself in the Infinite." His doctrine and his morality are, death for death's sake. Everything in us protests against such a religion. There is not one of our heart-pulses that does not revolt from it, and from all that resembles it in ancient and modern stoicism. The stoic philosophy, under the name of insensibility, urges us to annihilation. It is useless to tell us to die erect, while at the same time it invites us to die by an effort to attain to impassibility, the proud *nirvana* of the

west. The blessings with which our existence abounds preclude us from admitting for a single moment that an irremediable curse rests upon it. We have no sympathy with those who see in God the yawning abyss of an infinite gloom. We believe in the living God, and we have seen the smile of His love shining upon us.

II. We meet with two other solutions of the problem of suffering, that are very widely accepted in our day. The first sees in suffering a *beneficent necessity*, a condition of progress for man; whilst in the second system it serves to *expiate and repair his faults*. We reject them both as an offence against God. In fact, if you are willing to believe with Christians that suffering has laid hold of a world not originally made for it, and has become, through the Divine goodness, a means of progress, you make it a part of the original plan of creation before any moral cause has let it loose; that is, you refer it directly to God; He has decreed it; it is a result of His good pleasure. He might have assigned other conditions to our development; He might have brought us to maturity without placing us in this terrible school. But this He was not willing to do; it has pleased Him to devote these myriads of beings to suffering, satisfied if by all these woes He can secure the ultimate happiness and full development of the few chosen creatures who do not sink amid the rude and frightful confusion! Understand me well, I am combating the notion that suffering was *originally* assigned to us as a condition of progress. If it was so assigned, before we ourselves had rendered it necessary, this was an arbitrary act, there was no absolute need for its infliction; and I have the right to complain, and to say to the Almighty,—“If Thou couldst have urged us to what is good along a smooth path, where our feet would not have been cut by the sharp stones, why hast Thou not done so? And if Thou couldst have avoided piercing our hearts with the goad with which Thou drivest on our tottering steps, why hast Thou taken it into Thy mighty hand? What have I done to Thee? I did not ask Theo

for being. Who art Thou, O God, who takest delight in smiting?"

We also reject the idea which regards our sufferings as an *atonement for our faults*. How can a tear blot out a sin? If this tear springs from a penitent heart, and if it flows with our prayers, it will have power to obtain our pardon; but it is not the suffering in itself—the suffering apart from the moral sentiment—which brings us the blessing; it is the sentiment which pervades it; and the pain is useless, except as it manifests the reality of this sentiment. What we reject is atonement through suffering alone. Those who hold the theory form no idea of what it is which has to be expiated, of the awful character of the evil committed. They talk of faults, and not of sins; they imagine that a few sufferings will be sufficient to make the balance even. Ah! they would not think so, if they knew what sin is, and how hateful it is in the eyes of the Most Holy!

How could the sufferings of all the creatures blot out a single sin? How could they cause that which has been to exist no longer? All the oceans could not wash out this moral stain. What more is there in tears, which are only tears, that is to say, which simply express suffering and not repentance? Further, there are different kinds of suffering. There are cursed pains, namely such as lead to cursing. Murmuring and blasphemy are regarded as faults, even by the least delicate conscience. If we examine our sufferings closely, we shall soon see that far from paying our debts to God by this means, we contract fresh ones. Lastly, and still looking at purely passive suffering, I cannot possibly conceive what it sets right. Doubtless, we admit that a lost race cannot be saved without suffering; but, as we shall see, the sorrow which saves is different from a passive sorrow: it is a free sacrifice; it is the manliest, strongest, and holiest action which can be performed beneath the skies. There is no analogy between the august doctrine of redemption and the idea which we are combating. Purely passive suffer-

ing is a consequence of evil; but it can neither repair, nor destroy, nor redeem it. This will not move the heart of God; no, not though it were infinite! One additional wretched person does not make one less guilty person; thousands of unhappy beings do not tend to increase the sum of good, and though you should show all passive sufferings, present and future, heaped together on the same head and at the same moment, if you have nothing else to offer to God, if there is not in this infinite pain the display of an infinite holiness, nothing has been accomplished towards the pardon and salvation of men. What idea do we form of God when we imagine that He can only be appeased by being avenged, and avenged in the literal sense of the word! What? He will not pardon till all the tears and blood of His enemies have flowed? That is a mockery of pardon which is nothing but the retaliation of heaven against earth! If suffering, an infinite suffering, enters into atonement, as we shall show it does, it is not suffering considered simply as such; and those who think that our sorrows, regarded merely as sorrows, appease the wrath of God, form as false an idea of the matter as those who think that He has inflicted them upon His creatures without a moral necessity. Their god resembles the savage chief who will not be appeased towards his enemy till he has dipped his arrow in his blood. If this is their god, he is not ours. Such a god inspires us with horror; we cannot perceive his justice any more than his love. He is a Moloch, who is honoured just in proportion to the number of human victims consumed upon his altar.

The distressing part of such theories is that, to all our woes, which they pretend to explain, they add another and that the worst of all; they hide God's face, they take Him from us. They do not lessen the miseries of earth and when we raise our eyes to heaven to seek for help, lo! it is empty and dismal. As long as my God remains, nothing is lost; but when He is taken from me then all fails. How can I keep myself from despair? Who

shall deliver me? Of what use is it to call, like the psalmist, for the wings of the dove or even of the eagle? They would only bear me into a gloomy desert, since if I ascended I should find nothing but a *dead* god. But it is not so, ye afflicted ones of the earth; you have a Father in heaven. Above, all is bright, increasingly bright; from all your darkness there does not arise one shadow to cover the face of your God. Our sufferings condemn none but ourselves, and the gospel is called good news simply because it gives us this solution of the painful problem. Let us take this as our first consolation!

At the outset I am struck with the fair and emphatic manner in which the question is stated. Christianity does not lower our conception of the enemy it seeks to destroy. Certain of victory, it presents him just as he is in reality. No picture of suffering can equal that which the Bible has drawn; it is as worthy of admiration in this respect as for its descriptions of the glory and felicity of God; and it is precisely because it brings together and contrasts true and eternal happiness with our troubled and wretched life, that it reaches a pathos so touching. It has given condemnation its true name, the one which best expresses, in a single word, all that it is and all that it blights and destroys. Our text calls it death! It is in fact the power of death which has stricken the ground beneath our feet with barrenness, so that our food has to be drawn from it by the sweat of our brow; which has filled the air we breathe with deadly vapours; which cleaves to our body and stealthily undermines it till it lays it in the dust whence it came; and which at last, placing its iron hand on our hearts, presses, stifles, and breaks them! This world belongs to death. It is his pale kingdom: his breath passes over every flower, withers every life, and freezes every soul. Man is a culprit, an outlaw, the constant prey of the destroying power which breaks off all the branches of the tree one after another, before cutting it down at the root by a last blow of the axe. But the Bible is not satisfied

with these general features; it not only describes pain as it is in itself, but also each of our sufferings. From Rachel, who will not be comforted because her children are not, to the poor man covered with sores and laid at the rich man's door, there is not one of the sad scenes of human life which is not depicted in a few simple, profound words, that are never forgotten and that leave an ineffaceable impression on the mind. It does more; it lays open to our view the heart of the afflicted, it tells their sorrows, it repeats their complaints. I hear the tearful, groaning, and yet believing prayers of David in his various trials. I am made acquainted with his moral crises, with the conflict of feelings by which his heart is torn. The inner tempest, the nameless anguish of Job, cruelly smitten and unjustly accused; his faint-heartedness, his murmurings, his despairing cry from out of the deep waters,—everything is revealed to me in vivid, vehement words. The bitter tears of Peter after his fall, and the sigh of weariness which Paul heaves, teach me to know other but no less painful crises of the soul. If there is no height to which the Bible does not rise, there is no depth to which it does not descend. I can never go so far in moral agony, but what it has gone before me. Yes; though I should descend into those abysses where every bright ray seems to be quenched, I should meet with the traces of an inspired writer. If I am in anguish, the Bible is in anguish with me, like the God who gave it me; and this is why it is the book of the afflicted, written for them, and as I would even say, written by them.

We have now to inquire what Origin the Bible ascribes to Suffering, the gravity of which it certainly has not underrated. "*By sin,*" says St. Paul, "death entered into the world." You understand his meaning. It follows that, unless we attribute sin to God Himself, we must completely exonerate Him in regard to this terrible invasion of our world by suffering. Not one of our afflictions is attributable to Him. He no more created this

world for sorrow than for sin. When God looked down upon His finished work of creation, "He beheld all that he had made," says the Book of Genesis, "and lo, it was very good." How could it have been otherwise? After the creation of each fresh series of beings, we read these words, which sound like a sublime refrain, "God blessed them!" Every creature has been hailed with this blessing on the very threshold of life. Creation is a manifestation of eternal love, and as it were a pouring forth of its wealth in time and in space. "God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good." Wherever He turned His eye, He beheld happiness and glory. The scale of being was bright with joy and life; the blessing rose and increased from step to step, up to the creatures who were nearest to God, and in whom His image shone. Who can say what God saw when at one glance He beheld the young and glorious world, which had just issued from His hands and which bore the impress of His perfections? Who can describe the scene of beauty illumined by the first sunbeams that shone on this smiling earth, none of whose voices was plaintive? Who can describe the spectacle it presented when, summing up in one all the blessings He had lavished upon it, God blessed it on the seventh day, and rested to contemplate a work worthy of Himself? If you allege the traces of death that furrow the ground on which we stand, and the vast ruins of former worlds, I reply that, notwithstanding those thousands of years, we are but of yesterday, and are ignorant of the dramas that may have been enacted in a former world. It remains none the less certain that we are warranted in saying, with regard to each of God's creations, as they came forth from His hands, "He beheld it, and lo, it was very good."

What then is the great destroyer, "the great interpolator of creation," to employ Tertullian's expression? Who has devastated this lovely world? Who has opened its gates to suffering and death? Christianity answers with a single word, the word of our text, "By *sin* death

entered into the world." I have not now to consider the grave question of sin itself; I take it in its simplest and most elementary signification. "Sin," according to the words of St. John, is "the transgression of the law;" it is rebellion against the will of God. Nor shall I enter into the question of original sin; here also it is enough to say with St. Paul, "that death and suffering reign over all men, because all have sinned." Is there any one of my readers who has not sinned, and who is perfectly pure? If there is, then I admit he has some right to bring forward his claim; but if there is not one but must say, "I also have been rebellious; I also have broken God's law," in that case, of what can we complain? Let us be silent, and admit the justice of God. Is not sin disorder, and the worst kind of disorder? Is it not the height of anarchy, is it not the violation of the law of the moral world? And you would have this disorder, this anarchy, bring no consequences in their train; you would have everything be as if order reigned! But, first, this cannot be; sin not only produces suffering, it is its very principle and essence. Either say that God is not the supreme Good, or admit that the creature cannot break the bond that unites him to God without cutting himself off from well-being and happiness. Either say that the soul is not made for God, degrade it to the rank of one of the lower creatures not destined to the higher life; or admit that it loses this higher life, that it suffers and dies, by violently separating itself from God. Suffering, immeasurable suffering, is inherent in evil. You cannot prevent its being so; and as long as rebellion exists, suffering will follow sin as the shadow follows the substance: or, more correctly speaking, it cannot be severed from it. To ask God that it might be otherwise would be to ask Him to cease from being God, in other words, from being the Source of life, glory, and happiness.

But I go farther, and I maintain that God is not content to let evil produce suffering by a sort of natural law; He has *willed* that it should be thus. He has inter-

vened to punish and smite the rebel. It is He who has directly established this relation between suffering and sin. Death in creation is not a common accident, as the superficial thinker believes; it is a decree of the sovereign will. Chastisement alone re-establishes order in a world given up to the anarchy of sin; and he who has not been willing that God should reign over his heart comes under the dominion of death, and thus, having rejected the Father's love, he is made to feel the heavy hand of the righteous God. "*Death has reigned over all men, because all have sinned;*" and through it the offended God still rules, but in the way in which rebels are ruled. Not that God finds any satisfaction or vengeance in the chastisement which He inflicts. He does not willingly afflict the children of men; but He has taken His own law as it stands, and given it His sanction. Consequently, it is not God, but his own sin, that the guilty man must blame when he suffers; for he has of his own accord made God's law his enemy, and has placed himself under the sword.

The easy indulgent god whom the world has fashioned for itself is not our God. We avow boldly that we believe in the God who punishes evil, because we believe in the God who loves! A god who cannot punish, who cares neither for good nor evil, is a god who does not trouble himself about us; and his goodness is simply a cold indifference. Such a distant and scornful majesty fills me with indescribable fear. It is a terrible thing, doubtless, to fall into the hands of the living God; but there is something more terrible still, and that is to fall into the hands of a dead god, a phantom god, that is to say into the empty void. What can we make of a common (*banal*) love, which can neither be offended nor wounded? The heart of a god who smiles at evil is of too little worth to be cared about. He who is indignant at sin, and smites it, He only can love. He does not dwell in an inaccessible heaven, a cold region which cannot be affected by an act of sin, because it cannot be affected by a prayer. He is a Father; and a father does

not look resignedly upon the degradation of his child, nor does he give him any rest in his ruin. Holy severities of our God, we discover in you how His love burns; for His love is also a consuming fire!

This terrible question of the origin of suffering is thus mixed up with that of the origin of evil. Sin as well as death proceed not from the holy and gracious God, but from the perverted will of the creature! If now you are indignant because He has allowed the guilty act to be accomplished, to be renewed, and to bring with it a whole train of sufferings, I reply that you forget that God has really willed the liberty of His chosen creature. He has put his destiny into his hands. Nor could He have done otherwise, because we were made to love Him, and love without liberty is nothing! Nor did He wish for a heart at any price; He wished for a heart that would give itself; and before a heart can give itself it must belong to itself. Hence the solemn probation through which we have to pass. Hence liberty, with all its perils. Hence the possibility of holiness and heaven; but also the possibility of rebellion and hell. Hence the glory of angels and the fall of men; for liberty must be maintained both as regards its terrible as well as its beneficent results, or else it is simply an illusion. This respect for liberty God has shown in a striking manner in the history of our race, in those numberless miseries which our rebellion has let loose. When we consider all that has resulted from a single bad determination, we might wish to reject and abdicate so terrible a power. But this is not allowed. What then can we do but cast ourselves into the mighty arms of our God? For I cannot forget that, in presence of my liberty, He has maintained His own, the sovereign liberty of His love, which can intervene to save me. I have only to rest in it, and my weakness becomes strength! Ah! far from the feeling of liberty being calculated to fill man with pride, it is calculated to terrify him; and the more he feels himself responsible, and master of his immortal destinies, the

he must feel the urgent need of grace, which alone restore and preserve ! As we consider the lamentable issue of the first test by which humanity was tried, as we see that through the disobedience of one man it passed upon all the race, what can we do but humble and invoke with tears the Divine help, without which we cannot triumph over evil !

Let this be the result of our reflections on the origin of our sufferings. Let us draw from them a great and salutary lesson of humility ; let us smite on our breasts. The vast sorrows which desolate our world, let us estimate to the extent of the sins of humanity. We have sinned, O my God ; we have done what is displeasing in Thy sight, and Thou wilt be found just when Thou shalt judge us. Out of a thousand counts of accusation, we cannot answer Thee to one. Shrink not from descending into the depths of humiliation. The very same which casts you down will raise you up. The more you lay suffering to the charge of the fallen creature, the more purely and brightly will the idea of God shine above you like the star that lightens up the darkest night. As long as you can believe in a holy and gracious God, you will be able to regain everything ; nothing will irrevocably be lost ; everything can be saved and restored to Him. To convince yourself of this, listen to the gospel hymn which resounds so sweetly in our hearts :—
" Peace on Earth." This hymn was sung when the Deliverer was coming down to our dark shores. To save us, He had left His throne and His crown, and all the royal eternal glory which belongs to Him as the only begotten Son of the Father. But by condescending to our lowly path, He has won another royalty, the sceptre of which is a reed, and the diadem a crown of thorns. This God of Sorrows is the Great and Sovereign Comforter of our unhappy race, as we shall show you in our next course. Here then is the true King of our souls, He whom the patriarch Job was only a feeble image. Him be glory for ever !

The Gospel according to Mark.

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. J. H. GODWIN.

BOOK I.

Introduction, and Ministry in Galilee.

PART II. Div. II. (Continued.)

III. 23 And it happened that He was going along on the sabbath through the corn-fields, and His disciples began

SEC. III. (Matt. xii. 1-8; Mark ii. 23-28; Luke vi. 1-5.) The time of this section is shown by the act which gave occasion to the censure of the Pharisees. The ears of corn were nearly ripe. It must therefore have been spring, and not far from the passover, when according to the law the first-fruits of harvest were presented. (Lev. xxiii. 10; Deut. xvi. 9; Josephus Ant., iii. 10.) The barley harvest preceded the wheat. (Exod. ix. 31.) In the gospel of St. Matthew this event not only follows the mission of apostles, but its time is shown by the expression "at that season" (xii. 1); this being connected with the same reference to time, both before (xi. 25) and afterwards (xiv. 1). St. Mark gives no other indication of time, and does not connect this narrative with the preceding. The arrangement of St. Luke is similar, the connection being equally indefinite. He calls the sabbath the "second-first," a term which does not occur elsewhere and has been understood in different ways. The simplest interpretation is, *the first sabbath of the second year*; the second year being either the second year of a cycle, or, more probably, the year beginning with the month Nisan in the spring, the other year beginning with the month Tisri in the autumn. Accordingly this sabbath would be before the passover, and not after it. St. John mentions only *one passover* (vi. 4) besides that at the commencement (ii. 13) and that at the close of the public life of Jesus (xii. 1). The other evangelists mention only the last passover, and they refer only to *one spring*, in connection with the ministry in Galilee. All agree in showing that the public ministry of Christ was for two years, and no more. If the unnamed

to walk on, plucking the ears. ²⁴ And the Pharisees said to Him, See, how they are doing on the sabbath what is not lawful. ²⁵ And He said to them, Did you never read what David did when he had need, and was hungry himself and those with him? ²⁶ How he entered into the house of God, in the presence of Abiathar, a high priest, and ate the loaves of the presentation, which it is not lawful to eat, except for the priests; and gave also to those who were with him?

festival of St. John v. 1, which preceded the second passover, was that of Purim, the chronology is consistent. The conduct of the Pharisees, as described in this and the following section, is similar to that recorded by St. John. The opposition in Galilee appears to have been a consequence of the prior opposition in Jerusalem (v. 16). Passing through some fields, probably in the neighbourhood of Capernaum, the disciples of Christ gathered, rubbed, and ate a few ears of corn. The Pharisees condemned their conduct as a violation of the sabbath. Jesus justified it by referring to the conduct of David; to the reason of the law; and to His own authority.

²³ The disciples were not trespassing, by making a new way through the corn; but, following the path, they gathered the ears growing by the side. (Jud. xvii. 8.) This was lawful (Deut. xxiii. 25).

²⁴ What would be right on another day, the Pharisees judged to be wrong on the sabbath. Gathering ears of corn is condemned in the Talmud, as a species of reaping.

²⁵ The incident is related 1 Sam. xxi. 6.

²⁶ The statement is not that this was done *in the priesthood*, or *in the days*, of Abiathar, but in his presence; the reference to him being not chronological, which would be useless, but argumentative, to show that the conduct of David had his sanction. Ahimelech was *the* high priest at the time; but a more eminent person, who succeeded to the office (1 Sam. xxiii. 9), saw and approved what was done. The definite article is wanting in the best MSS. The preposition often denotes *before* or *in the presence of*. (1 Tim. vi. 13; Acts xiii. 9; xxiv. 19; xxv. 10; 1 Cor. vi. 1.) Abiathar would not be referred to, if his name had not been correctly preserved in Jewish traditions. What David did was right; and it was more readily received by the Jews as right, because it was done with the sanction of Abiathar. The twelve cakes were changed every sabbath, and when removed they were for the priests only. (Lev. xxiv. 9.)

²⁷ And He said to them, The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. ²⁸ Therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the sabbath.

V. ¹ **AND** He entered again into the synagogue. And a man was there having a withered hand; ² and they were

²⁷ This appears from the place and reason of the original appointment (Gen. ii. 3).

²⁸ It could not be said of the *principles* of right, that they were made for man, and might be set aside for human welfare: they are universally good. But *rules* laid down for human welfare may be in some cases adverse to it, and their obligation therefore changes. He who knows perfectly, both the will of God and the wants of men, has authority over such laws. St. Matthew adds three statements—another precedent given by the conduct of priests; another assertion of the dignity of Christ; and the quotation again of the words of Hosea, respecting the Divine judgment on what is moral and what is ceremonial.

There may be carefulness for ceremonial practices, with carelessness of moral principles.

Rules respecting means are always subordinate to their end.

The sabbath is for the advantage of man, and therefore for all.

Christ is Judge of what is good and right for mankind.

SEC. IV. (Matt. xii. 9-14; Mark iii. 1-6; Luke vi. 6-11.) On another sabbath, probably the next, Jesus was in the synagogue, probably in Capernaum, and taught there. The scribes and Pharisees watched Him to see if, in the cure of a sick person, they might find a cause for accusation. According to St. Matthew, some persons asked a question respecting the lawfulness of such works, and received an answer drawn from their own practice. His enemies not being satisfied with this, He proceeded to a further justification of His conduct. Directing a diseased man to stand up in the assembly, thus awakening his hope, He proposed to His adversaries a question which contrasted their conduct with his own. Receiving no reply,

watching Him, if He would cure him on the sabbath ; that they might bring an accusation against Him.

² And He said to the man who had the withered hand, Rise in the midst. ⁴ And He said to them, Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good, or to do evil ? to save life, or to kill ? But they were silent. ⁶ And looking round on them with indignation, being distressed for the senselessness of their minds, He said to the man, Stretch out thy hand. And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored. ⁶ And the Pharisees going out directly, made a conspiracy with the Herodians against Him, that they might destroy Him.

He bade the man stretch out his withered hand. He made the attempt, and succeeded ; and with this exercise of faith his health was restored. But the enemies of Jesus were the more enraged, because both their wickedness and weakness had been exposed.

¹ St. Luke says this was on another sabbath, and he states that the right hand was withered.

⁴ They were themselves working on the sabbath, for the worst purposes ; He was working only for the best.

⁵ There was *wrong*, the proper object of *anger* ; and there was *misery*, the proper object of *compassion*. The last clause of the verse in the received text seems to be taken from Matt. xii. 18, being wanting in the best MSS.

⁶ The Herodians were another party, being the supporters of Herod and of the Roman government. The two were united by their common hostility to Jesus. (xii. 18 ; Matt. xxii. 16.)

The best things may supply occasions for the worst.

The greatest crimes may be committed by those who censure others.

Strength for service comes with the endeavour to obey.

Div. III. *Progress of Ministry.—Second Journey.* (III. 7-35.)

Sec. I. ⁷ And Jesus removed with His disciples unto the lake; and a great multitude from Galilee followed Him; and

Div. III. (Chap. iii. 7-35.) Besides the general statements of the ministry of Christ in Galilee, two journeys in the first period are noticed by all the evangelists; and they are distinguished, though the one soon followed the other, and different times of the second are referred to (Matt. iv. 23; ix. 35; Mark i. 39; iii. 7; Luke iv. 44; viii. 1). In the first journey four disciples only were called to accompany Him; but in the second He was attended by the twelve. In this, and the two following divisions, an account is given of what took place in the second journey; but the eclectic and didactic character of the history is manifest; for particular mention is made only of what belongs to the beginning and the end. The selection of the apostles was in the beginning, and probably at the northern part of the lake near to Capernaum. After mentioning this, St. Mark at once proceeds to relate some of the most memorable of the words and works of Jesus, which the apostles heard and witnessed before their mission.

But the discourse on miracles, the interference of His kindred, the parable of the sower, the stilling of the storm, and the cure of the demoniacs, immediately preceded the return to Capernaum from the country of the Gadarenes on the south-east of the lake. A further account of this journey is given by St. Luke. From his narrative it appears that after the call of the twelve and the address made to the disciples, Jesus passed through Capernaum His way to the south (Luke vii. 1). There the servant of a centurion was cured, which is also related by St. Matthew, viii. 5. From Capernaum He went, on the following day, to Nain, and restored the widow's son (Luke vii. 11). Further on, He was met by the messengers of John, and spoke to the people respecting him (vii. 18); and on the same day He dined with a Pharisee, in whose house He accepted the gratitude of a penitent woman (vii. 36). Not many days would be required for these events. All follow the return to Capernaum, when the paralytic was cured and Matthew called, but preceded the conversations in his house. After the account, in the preceding division, of the opposition of the Pharisees at different times the narrative is resumed, and an account is given of what soon followed the call of Matthew—the departure from Capernaum for the second journey. The increasing popularity of Jesus is described, and the measure He adopted for the advancement of His kingdom. With this is joined an account of the opposition of the Pharisees and of His kindred.

Sec. I. (iii. 7-12.) After a short stay in Capernaum, Jesus again left, and

from Judæa, and from Jerusalem, ⁸ and from Idumæa, and beyond the Jordan; and those about Tyre and Sidon,—a great multitude, hearing what He was doing, came unto Him.

⁹ And He spoke to His disciples, that a small skiff should keep near Him, on account of the crowd, that they might not press on Him. ¹⁰ For He cured many; so that they rushed upon Him in order that they might touch Him, such as had diseases. ¹¹ And the evil spirits, whenever they saw Him, rushed to Him, and cried out saying, Thou art the Son of God. ¹² And many times He commanded them, that they should not make Him known.

¹³ And He ascended to the mountain, and called unto Sec. Selecti
of Apos whom He himself chose; and they went away to Him.

continue His visitation of other places. The locality of His ministry at this time is mentioned; the large concourse of people from the vicinity and from a distance; the many cures of the sick who came to Him; and the testimony of evil spirits, offered but refused.

⁸ Similar statements respecting the multitudes, and the miracles, are given by St. Luke after the selection of the twelve (vi. 17-19).

¹² The prohibition of the demons is mentioned (i. 45).

Though some reject Christ, many will come to Him and be healed.

Wicked spirits acknowledge Him, when men will not.

Sec. II. (Mark. iii. 13-19; Luke vi. 12-16.) The selection of the apostles is here related, the purpose of their appointment is stated, and their names. These are given by St. Matthew in connection with their mission, x. 1-4; and again by St. Luke, Acts i. 13.

¹³ The mountain was probably one well known, near Capernaum, Matt. v. 1. St. Luke says that Jesus passed the night in prayer to God, and when the day came chose His apostles.

¹⁴ And He appointed twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, ¹⁵ and to have authority to cure diseases, and to cast out demons; (¹⁶ and He gave to Simon a name)—Peter, ¹⁷ and James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James, (and He gave to them names, Boanerges, which is sons of thunder,) ¹⁸ and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alpheus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the zealot, ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

III. ²⁰ And they went into a house : and a crowd again came together, so that they were not able even to eat bread.

¹⁶ There are two parentheses in the catalogue, one preceding the name, the other following. The peculiar construction in the first seems to have arisen from the wish to place the name Peter in the list of the apostles' names : hitherto the name Simon has been always used. All the names depend upon the preceding verb. He appointed twelve,—Peter, and James, etc. Of the twelve, five were already called to be His attendants (i. 16, 19; ii. 14); and two are mentioned as disciples (John i. 44, 50). Of the remaining five there is no previous notice. The name was given to Simon when he became a disciple (John i. 43). The names given to James and John were also commendatory, and seem to describe them as having the eloquence of heavenly messengers. James the son of Zebedee was the first of the apostles who suffered martyrdom; the other James is often noticed in the Acts of the Apostles. Bartholomew seems to be the patronymic of Nathanael, who is elsewhere associated with Philip, John i. 46, xxi. 2. Instead of Thaddæus, Lebbaeus is in the list of St. Matthew; in those of St. Luke, Judas the son of James. The first two names were probably alike significant of character (heart), and distinguish this Judas from the Iscariot (John xiv. 22). The Aramæan designation of the second Simon is translated by St. Luke.

Divine truth and goodness are communicated by human agency and influence.

The feeble and lowly are chosen for the best and greatest works.

"And they who belonged to Him, hearing this, came out to restrain Him; for they said, He is beside Himself.

SEC. III. (Mark iii. 20-39; Matt. xii. 22-37.) After the selection of the apostles, St. Luke gives the sermon on the plain, with the four incidents already noticed, and then the parable of the sower, omitting this controversy, a similar address being given subsequently by him (xi. 14). It is given by St. Matthew with other controversies, and is by him also connected with the same parable, subsequently spoken.—Jesus came to some town on the side of the lake, and entered a house for refreshment; but He was prevented by the assembled multitude, such was their eagerness to secure His aid and His readiness to help all. His kindred wished to prevent the ill consequences of this indifference to comfort, and perhaps to check the renewed hostility of the Pharisees, by withdrawing Him from the crowd; but they could not enter the house. With a contrary purpose, the Pharisees, who were within the house, reproached Him as an associate of Satan; and to subvert the evidence of His miracles, they represented His works as effected by the power of the devil. Jesus replied to their accusation by a series of similitudes. He first shows by two comparisons the absurdity of their supposition; and then by another the proper conclusion. He finally declares the peculiar and unpardonable wickedness of His opponents, in attributing to Satan the Divine power which was shown in His works. The cure of the sick would be attributed by the scribes to the same cause, the agency of Satan. The reality of the miracles of Jesus being unquestionable, objection could be raised only to the purpose for which, and the power by which, these works were performed.

Miracles are not represented in the Bible as violations or suspensions of natural laws; but simply as superhuman works, attesting a Divine mission (Exod. iv. 5; John v. 36; Heb. ii. 4). The power of God was in them, certainly, and manifestly, and for a special purpose; but we are not told *how* it was exercised. The miracles of Christ are designated by three terms, which describe them under different aspects. They are extraordinary events, *wonders*; the effects of superhuman agency, *powers*; and the evidences of a Divine mission, *signs*. Unless extraordinary they would not excite attention, or prove any peculiar endowment. Only by superhuman knowledge, power, or goodness, could more than human authority be maintained. But by these separately, and still more by their combined presentation, evidence is afforded of a Divine mission, conclusive to all who believe in the moral government of God (John iii. 2; ix. 30; xx. 30). The miracles of Jesus Christ are referred to in three ways: as signs of His mission, John xiv. 11, etc.; as manifestations of His character and authority, John ii. 11, etc.; as symbols

²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, He holds to Beelzebul; and, By the chief of the demons He casts out the demons.

²³ And calling unto them, He said to them in parables; "How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. ²⁶ And if Satan stood up, and is divided

of the spiritual blessings which belong to His salvation, John v. 21; ix. 39, etc. The assumption that miracles are impossibilities which no testimony can establish is a limitation, if not a denial, of God. The testimony of the evangelists is to be believed, because *such* testimony never has deceived; and because, apart from the reality of the miracles related by them, the existence of the New Testament and of the Christian Church are facts unaccountable, and as contrary to experience as any miracle.

²⁰ The same effect of the concourse of people is noticed, vi. 81; and the same indifference to comfort is declared in replies given to disciples, John iv. 32, Matt. viii. 20.

²¹ The term used for the purpose of His kindred does not denote hostility or violence. It is used for friendly and gentle actions, as well as for those of a contrary character (i. 31; v. 41; ix. 10, 27). And the term used by them in reference to Jesus does not denote madness. It is used for the excitement produced by the miracles of Christ (ii. 12; v. 42; vi. 51); and it is the term that St. Paul says was applied to him as an enthusiast (2 Cor. v. 13). Of the brethren of Jesus it is said that, at this time, they had not faith in Him (John vii. 3). They improperly sought to interfere with His conduct, as His mother had done at the beginning (John ii. 4).

²² St. Matthew gives, as the occasion of this discourse, the cure of a demoniac and the impression made by the miracle on the minds of the people (xii. 22). Beelzebul may be another form for Beelzebub—the Lord of flies (2 Kings i. 2); but more probably it was a contemptuous designation of Satan, as the Lord of filth,—of the gods of the heathen, of the demons (1 Cor. x. 19, 20). The two charges are substantially the same; and only the second is given by St. Matthew. Jesus is represented as *having* Beelzebul for Lord. The verb is thus used in reference to God and to Christ, 1 John ii. 23, v. 12.

²³ The Pharisees were at the end of the room or court, while the disciples were seated near.

against himself, he cannot stand, but has an end. ²⁷ None is able to seize on the goods of the strong One, entering into his house ; unless first he bind the strong One, and then he will seize upon his house.

²⁸ “ Assuredly I declare to you, that all wrong deeds will be forgiven the sons of men, and evil speeches, whatever evil they shall speak ; ²⁹ but whoever shall speak evil of the Holy Spirit, has no release for ever, but is subject to an everlasting judgment.” ³⁰ Because they said, He has an evil spirit.

²⁸ After the two illustrative comparisons, the application follows.

²⁷ What cannot be inferred having been shown, what should be inferred is suggested by another comparison, the language of which is similar to that of Isa. xlix. 24. Satan is described as overcome (Luke x. 18 ; John xii. 31 ; xvi. 11), and as bound (Rev. xx. 2). Before this comparison, St. Matthew gives the reference to the judgment they passed on their own supposed exorcists, and the consequence of His casting out demons by the Spirit of God (xii. 27, 28). After the comparison, He gives the claim for acknowledgment (ver. 30).

²⁸ St. Matthew also mentions speaking against the Son of Man as that which might be forgiven, while speaking against the Holy Spirit would not be forgiven, either in this world or the future. In the one, evil was attributed to the human ; in the other, to the Divine. The superhuman was recognised, but referred to the devil. Of those who, having seen Jesus, thus sought to deceive others, it might well be supposed that no argument could convince, and no persuasion convert them. St. Matthew adds two other comparisons, of the good and bad trees, and of the treasury of good and bad things,—and the declaration respecting the *words* by which men are justified or condemned. After this he also gives the demand for a sign and the answer. These, as chiefly concerning the Jews, are not related by St. Mark. The discourse related by St. Luke (xi. 14), though it has many correspondences to this, has such differences as prove diversity. They belong to different periods of our Lord's ministry ; time and place, occasion and persons addressed, are different ; and each has peculiarities of statement, of expression, and arrangement. It might be expected that the same objections would be often raised ; and the most suitable answers would be properly repeated. An exact and complete agreement between two series of

IV. ²¹ Then His brethren and His mother came to Him, and standing outside they sent unto Him, calling Him. ²² And

events, or statements, certainly would be improbable; but there is only a partial agreement, with many important differences.

The service of God may require what seems adverse to our welfare.

They who follow the highest reason may appear unreasonable.

Absurd arguments satisfy those who are indifferent to truth.

Christ's miracles, being all good, showed His power over the Evil One.

For all common sins there is repentance and forgiveness.

They who make the best things effects of the worst are irreclaimable.

SEC. IV. (Mark iii. 31-35; Matt. xii. 46-50; Luke viii. 19-21.) The kindred of Christ, mentioned in the preceding section, being prevented the crowd from entering the house where He was, stood without, and sent a message to Him. He took occasion from this to declare who were His kindred most esteemed by Him; thus giving commendation to His disciples and reproving those who, not regarding simply the will of God, improperly sought to influence His conduct. This incident is given by St. Matthew exactly the same connection with what precedes and follows. In the narrative of St. Luke there is a slight change of position. There it is placed after the parable of the sower, but it is not said to have followed. He connects the parable, which he says was spoken to people from various towns with his general statement of the journey through towns and villages. Moreover, the incident would be a less suitable commencement for the division of his narrative; and therefore also it is put between the parable and the voyage, without any specification of time.

²¹ St. Luke says that they were unable to enter because of the crowd. He gives the declaration of Christ, without the introductory question. The mother is in some MSS. put before the brethren, the first reference being thus made to agree with the following.

²² The sisters are added in the best MSS. The names of the brethren of

a crowd was seated around Him : and they said to Him, Lo, Thy mother, and Thy brethren, and Thy sisters, outside are seeking Thee. ³³ And He answered them saying, Who is My mother ? or My brethren ? ³⁴ And looking around on those who were seated about Him, He said, Behold My mother, and My brethren. ³⁵ For whoever shall do the will of God, this is My brother, and My sister, and mother.

Jesus are given, vi. 3. They are mentioned John ii. 12; vii. 5; Acts i. 14; 1 Cor. ix. 5. These four men, when they became disciples, are distinguished from the apostles. In the history they are always connected with Mary, as only her own children would be ; and Jesus is called her *firstborn* Son. Her interference is noticed three times, and in each case with some reproof.

The claims of natural kindred are not the highest.

They who do the will of God are, with Christ, children of God.

“THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT remain to this day in the *Soudan*. On the 26th June we had the most extraordinary dust storm that had ever been seen by the inhabitants. About 4.30 p.m., I saw approaching from the south-west apparently a solid range of immense brown mountains high in the air. So rapid was the passage of this extraordinary phenomenon that in a few minutes we were in actual pitchy darkness. At first there was no wind, and the peculiar calm gave an oppressive character to the event. We were in a *darkness that might be felt*. So intense was the darkness that we tried to distinguish our hands placed close before our eyes : not even an outline could be seen. This lasted for upwards of twenty minutes. It then rapidly passed away, and the sun shone as before ; but we had felt the darkness that Moses had inflicted upon the Egyptians” (Exod. x. 21-23).—BAKER’S “*Nile*,” Vol. ii., p. 340.

Outlines.

Christians the Temples of God.

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”—1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.

A JUST sense of the privileges and responsibilities of the dispensation to which we belong would enable us to meet many of the errors of the day, and would lead us to seek for the higher forms of spiritual life. This text is pre-eminently adapted to produce such an adequate appreciation of our position in the Spirit's dispensation.

I. CHRISTIANS ARE THE TEMPLES OF GOD.

The idea of a temple was familiar to the heathen, and on several accounts interesting to the Jew. Hence the inspired writers used it in order to convey to them Christian instruction. Christ set the example (John ii. 19). It is sometimes applied to Christians individually (1 Cor. vi. 19), and sometimes to them collectively (Eph. ii. 21). Both senses are included in the text. The temple *was* (a) *Set apart as holy*. So the Christian is “holy to the Lord;” the dedication may be formal, it should be spiritual (1 Pet. ii. 5). (β) *It was a place of meeting with God*. It was God's house amongst men's houses: through Christ—“the Temple”—man meets with God; the “way into the holiest of all” is “made manifest.” (γ) *It was a place of worship*. So in the Christian heart, and life, as in the Christian Church, “spiritual sacrifices” are offered to God.

II. THE SPIRIT OF GOD DWELLS IN THEM.

How can the Infinite dwell in the finite? Scripture affirms that even this blessing is not impossible, nor too great, e.g. Rom. viii. 9; Eph. iii. 17. The Spirit dwelt in the inspired writers in a special manner. This suggested the possibility of multitudes receiving His bless-

and prepared the way for it. By their changed
 many have shown proof of the Divine indwelling.
 God is everywhere, shall He not specially make His
 presence felt in the souls of men, already made in His
 image, spiritual for the reception of the Spirit, and to
 whom His great chosen work of redemption was ac-
 plished? The indwelling is not a visit, but a per-
 manent residence. The Spirit "dwells" in us, our need
 continual, and the "Comforter abides with us for
 ever."

I. AS THE TEMPLES OF GOD THEY MUST BE HOLY.
 Dathan and Abiram were not to be approached when God was there.
 Uzzah fell dead. Awful is the condition
 of the man who, professing himself a Christian, wrongs
 his own soul, or disturbs the peace of God's Church. He
 does not destroy the Church, but will himself be destroyed.
 In the interrogative form of the text, "know ye not?"
 suggests that Christians need to be reminded of their
 calling and Divine relationship. But in the Chris-
 tian the feeling of self-respect is sustained by the higher
 regard for God Himself dwelling in him. Is it possible
 that he can be so far unfaithful as to put forth his hand
 against the sacred things of his God and Saviour? "His
 Spirit remaineth in him, and he cannot sin," etc. (1 John
 3.) The question of the text is encouraging as
 well as admonitory. The pursuit of holiness is rendered
 possible and delightful when God thus "works in us."
 Common life becomes sacred service. It is blessed to
 know when He who fills heaven with joy thus "dwells in
 us and walks in us." If fallen men on earth can through
 faith be temples of God, they may hope for the greatest
 blessedness when raised to heaven, where there is no
 temple, but "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are
 the temple of it."

How great is the loss of the unbeliever! He is unpro-
 fitably serving idols, but might himself be a temple of
 God, who is justly against him while unrepentant,
 and, did he but trust in Him, be with him at all times

as a sin-destroying Saviour, a reconciled Father, and an unchanging Comforter and everlasting Friend.

JOSIAH MILLER, M.A.

*The Temptation of our Lord.**

"Then was Jesus led up of the spirit to be tempted of the devil."—
MATT. iv. 1.

THE difficulties connected with this subject are increased by the fear which many feel of looking fully and fairly at the doctrine of our Lord's humanity, lest they should thus impair the lustre and glory of His Divinity. The effect of long continued controversy with those who have not been able to accept the doctrine of the Divinity has been to lead many to overlook the completeness and reality of His humanity. The latter is, to the full, as important as the former. And inasmuch as it pleased the Divine Son to take upon Himself our nature, to accept and wear it with its infirmities and limitations, we surely honour Him most when we recognise to the fullest extent the depth and greatness of that sacrifice. His grace and glory lie not so much in the fact that "he was rich," as that, being rich, "he became poor." Perhaps also the impressions left on the mind by Milton's great poem have to many increased the difficulty of a clear and scriptural interpretation of the passage.

I. *Why* was Jesus tempted?

1. That He might be "perfected" (Heb. ii. 10, 18). "Then was Jesus led up," that is, immediately after the baptism in connection with which He had been endued with power from on high. What more natural than that He should retire into solitude, to reflect on the change through which He had passed and the new work to which He was called? What more in accordance with the laws of human nature, than that the new forces of the soul

* For additional homiletical hints upon this subject, see Vol. i., p. 184-7, and Vol. ii., p. 90-93.

should thus be "called together," and made strong by resistance?

Up to the hour of His baptism we suppose the Redeemer to have grown "in wisdom and in grace." Why not regard the temptation as another stage in this growth?

2. He was tempted also that He might be "able to succour" and "be a merciful and faithful high priest" (Heb. ii. 17; iv. 15).

II. *How* was Jesus tempted?

The temptations came from without; they were not the birth of His own soul. "Tempted, yet without sin." Nevertheless, it was a *real* temptation and not a dramatic representation of one.

1. Was Satan *visibly* present, and the voice *audible*? Not *necessarily*, for Satan can gain access without any visible presentation. (Distinguish between a *personal* presence and a *material* one: absent in body, present in spirit.)

Probably not, for "He was tempted as we are," and we do not see the devil or hear him. If we could see him and know certainly that it was he, his temptations would much more easily be resisted. It seems more honouring to our Lord and more in accordance with Scripture, to believe that the agency employed was purely of a spiritual nature. When we read of His subsequent temptations, we do not usually associate with them the *bodily* presence of Satan.

2. But could there be an inward temptation without sin?

Evidently there could, because the sin is not in the temptation, but in yielding to it.

" Evil, unsought by God and man,
May come unsought, and leave no stain."

The things presented by the devil might appear exceedingly desirable. It was natural for Jesus to desire to satisfy His hunger, to receive a proof of His Father's protection, to secure the speedy fulfilment of that which had been predicted concerning Him. In the detection

of these "wiles," in the discernment of the evil of the suggestions, in the immediate and complete resistance we see the perfection and *sinlessness of His humanity*.

Lessons:—1. If the Son of God was tempted, at period of our Christian course can we expect to be exempt. The more of eminence there may be, the more reason there for Satan to seek to make the prize his own.

2. If the temptations of the sinless One were of the most insidious nature, we may conclude that the wiser and better we grow the more artful and ensnaring will be the devices of our adversary. It is not always necessary for Satan to disguise himself as "an angel of light." But whenever it is, he can and will thus conceal his presence and his purpose; he will present things apparently the most innocent, and on very high grounds desirable.

3. He who was Himself tempted has said, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," allow it to enter, entertain it, treat it as a guest. Temptation will assail; but the devout, vigilant, self-restrained ("sober," 1 Pet. v. 8) man will keep it at bay, and successfully vanquish it.

4. He who "spoiled principalities and powers" "received gifts for men," the rich and varied and abundant gifts of God's grace, received that He might impart; and in the exercise of these there are strength and safety (2 Pet. i. 10), as in the neglect of them there is danger (2 Cor. ii. 10, 11); while to animate and encourage He has said, "To him that overcometh, even as I also overcame, will I grant to sit with me on my throne."

J. WILSON COOMBS, B.A.

Fasting.

"And when Jesus had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered."—MATT. iv. 2.

Is fasting an ordinance of Christ? The word "fast" is not found in the Pentateuch; but we find the equivalent phrase, "afflict thy soul." There was only one fast

enjoined by the law, that on the day of atonement. Private fasts in seasons of sorrow and anxiety were frequent; and public fasts were gradually multiplied until in the time of our Lord there were those who "fasted twice in the week." The ostentation and hypocrisy with which these were commonly associated He condemns in Matt. vi. 16.

I. Refer to the life and teaching of Christ.

His own fast, like that of Moses and Elijah, however miraculous it may appear to us, was strictly in analogy with what may be observed still. In seasons of great excitement, when the mind is absorbed in study, and especially in rapt communion with God, the sensations of hunger and thirst are often unfelt. Jesus was "led up of the spirit;" He was "*full* of the Holy Ghost." It was the natural consequence of this, that He should fast during the forty days, and it was not until these were "ended" that He "hungered."

In the course of His subsequent ministry, He was found fault with, because His disciples did not fast (Mark ii. 18). He had evidently therefore not taught or required them to fast. His answer to those who would censure Him was, fasting should always be natural—the genuine expression of the inward feeling. "It is not natural for them now to fast; I am with them: afterwards, when I am removed and they are in deep sorrow, it will be natural, and then they will fast" (Matt. ix. 14, 15). And we find that the disciples, when their Lord was taken from them, were filled with sorrow, and no doubt their genuine sorrow found its true outward expression in fasting: but after His resurrection and ascension they so thoroughly felt that the Bridegroom was still with them *spiritually*, that they "returned to Jerusalem with great joy," and "did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."

On one other occasion our Lord referred to the subject, saying, "This kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting" (Matt. xvii. 21). For the work of casting out such

evils as these, there must be a state of great receptivity for the Spirit's power, very living faith (ver. 20), real communion; a state in which self and selfish interests are all merged in the desire to do the will and work of God. In such a state the desire for food would probably not be felt.

II. But the word "fasting" in this and other passages need not be understood *literally*. "Baptism" is sometimes used for the spiritual purification which the rite typifies, and so is "circumcision." In like manner "fasting" may be understood as denoting the surrender of self-will and self-love, of pride and love of power, and every form of selfishness. Thus understood, it is a Christian ordinance, to be observed by all and to be observed continually. Abstinence from food, whenever it is natural, is right. It must not be forced; it must not be imposed by one upon another. Generally, strict moderation is better—the being so fully occupied mentally and spiritually as to give no more thought to the gratification of appetite than the claims of health demand.

Abstinence exalted into a religious rite is sure to foster superstition and selfishness, as well as to impress the minds of onlookers with a sense of the unreality and hypocrisy of religious service. We do not honour God by dishonouring the body; but we do honour Him when we subordinate it to the spirit, and use it so as to promote and not to hinder our advance in the spiritual life, so as to increase our power of exorcising men of the spirit of evil, and conferring upon them the grace of God. "These go not out but by prayer and fasting." It is they who are emptied of self, absorbed in the earnest desire to do good to others, who have implicit confidence in God and very intimate communion with Him, who are found mighty to "pull down the strongholds of Satan." Is not *this* the fast that God has chosen?

J. WILSON COOMBS, B.A.

IN illustration of the subjects of the two immediately preceding outlines on *Temptation* and *Fasting*, we insert the following extract from sermon on *The Temptation in the Wilderness*, "UNSpoken SERMONS," by GEORGE MAC DONALD, a book full of freshness and beauty:—

"There is no attempt made to convey to us even the substance of the battle of those forty days. Such a conflict of spirit as for forty days absorbed all the human necessities of THE MAN in the cares of the Godhead could not be rendered into forms intelligible to us, or rather, could not be in itself intelligible to us, and therefore could not take any form of which we could lay hold. It is not till the end of those forty days that the Divine event begins to dawn out from the sacred depths of the eternal thought, becomes human enough to be made to appear, admits of utterance, becomes capable of being spoken in human forms to the ears of men, though yet only in a dark saying, which he that hath ears to hear may hear, and he that hath a heart to understand may understand.

". . . The first sign that He has come back to us, that the strife is approaching its human results, is His hunger. Emerging from the storms of the ocean of Divine thought and feeling into the shallower waters that lave the human shore, bearing with Him the treasures won in the strife, our Lord is straightway an hungered; and from this moment the temptation is human, and can be in some measure understood by us.

". . . He was not tempted with evil, but with good; with inferior forms of good that is, pressing in upon Him, while the higher forms of good held themselves aloof, biding their time, that is God's time. I do not believe that the Son of God could be tempted with evil; but I do believe that He could be tempted with good—to yield to which temptation would have been evil in Him, ruin to the universe. . . . Let us follow St. Matthew's record, and we shall see how the devil tempted Him to

evil, but not *with* evil. First, He was hungry, and the devil said, *Make bread of this stone.*

“The Lord had been fasting for forty days—a fast impossible, except during intense mental absorption. I do not think to glorify this fast by calling it miraculous. Wonderful such fasts are on record on the part of men; and in as much as the Lord was more of a man than His brethren, in so much might He be farther withdrawn in the depths of His spiritual humanity from the outer region of His physical nature. So much the slower would be the goings on of that nature; and fasting in His case might thus be extended beyond the utmost limits of similar fasts in others. This I believe was all,—and that all infinite in its relations. This is the grandest, simple and most significant, and therefore the Divinest, way regarding His fast. Hence, at the end of the forty days it was not hunger alone that made food tempting to Him but that exhaustion of the whole system, wasting itself all the time it was forgotten, which, reacting on the mind when the mind was already worn out with its own tension must have deadened it so that (speaking after the experience of His brethren, which alone will explain His) He could for the time see or feel nothing of the spiritual, and could only *believe in* the unfelt, the unseen. What temptation was here! There is no sin in wishing to eat, no sin in procuring food honestly that one may eat; but it rises even into an awful duty when a man knows that to eat will restore the lost vision of the eternal; when it operates on the brain, and thence on the mind, rendering the man capable of hope as well as of faith, of gladness as well as of confidence, of praise as well as of patience. Why then should He not eat? Why should He not put forth the power that was in Him, that He might eat? Because such power was His, not to take care of Himself but to work the work of Him that sent Him. Such power was His, not even to honour His Father save as His Father chose to be honoured, who is far more honoured in the ordinary way of common wonders than in the extraordinary

nary way of miracles. Because it was God's business to take care of Him, His to do what the Father told Him to do. To make that stone bread would be to take the care out of the Father's hands, and turn the Divinest thing in the universe into the merest commonplace of self preservation.

"And in nothing was He to be beyond His brethren, save in faith. No refuge for Him any more than for them, save in the love and care of the Father. Other refuge, let it be miraculous power or what you will, would be but hell to Him. God is refuge: God is life."

Reviews.

HUMAN SOCIETY: Its Providential Structure, Relations, and Offices. Eight Lectures delivered at the Brooklyn Institute, by F. D. HUNTINGTON, D.D. *Arthur Miall*. Mr. Huntington is already well known to the English reader by some of his former thoughtful and stimulating works. Critics perhaps would hesitate in applying the adjective *brilliant* to Mr. Huntington. But he possesses qualities, as a writer, of far more value. He is thoughtful, vigorous, and fresh. His style is simple and clear. What he says is always interesting, and interestingly though perhaps not showily put. His object in this volume is to present some of the Divine aspects of human society. To know society we must know man. "Other creatures are gregarious; mankind alone are social. There are herds of cattle, flocks of birds, shoals of fishes; but in none of these society. If mankind were associated only to eat, sleep, hunt, and secure animal protection, those brute terms would apply. As they forget their destiny they do degenerate into droves." The theories of Hobbes, Rousseau, and others who explain the origin of society without the recognition of the Divine, are effectually disposed of, and the social body shown to bear the stamp of its Maker in its origin, and throughout its history. The physical materials in the scene of social development from the beginning were such as

afforded facilities for forming society. "Social man, for instance, would want shelter; and the wood and the stone and the other architectural conditions were there. He wanted implements; and Tubal Cain, smiter of brass and iron, found metals and ores for his use, and Jubal became 'the father of all such as handle the harp and pipe,'—instruments of social festivity. He wanted clothing, and found fleeces, skins, and the materials of vegetable fabrics. He wanted to transport his chattels from one settlement to another, and beasts of burden knelt to take their load and follow his call. . . . The expression of the human face and the articulation of speech point to the same intention of our Maker. "The human face implies society, because it is so facile and efficient as a means of inter-communication. . . . If we were made for Robinson Crusoes, every man to his solitary island the face would not have been made as it is." And so language as uttered through the voice:—"If the silent face is expressive much more is that one specific organ of expression, speech. The first articulate sound the infant breathes is a prophecy of society, a promise of his own development into social forms of life." Space will not allow us to give further extracts in the present number. The headings of some of the chapters will afford some conception of the rich and interesting field of thought opened up for us in this book. "Human society, living instrument of Divine thought." "A discipline of individual character." "A school of mutual help." "In relation to social theories." "In relation to the intellect." "The sphere of the kingdom of Christ on earth." Few subjects are more needed to be in the present day brought frequently forward in the pulpit than the above, and no author we know of will be a more suggestive help in the preparation of such discourses than Mr. Huntington.

THE DESERT AND THE HOLY LAND. By ALEX. WALLACE, D.D. *Edinburgh: W. Oliphant & Co.* Dr. Wallace, in publishing this volume of his travels in the Desert and the Holy Land, has diffused over many circles of the reading public, as well as of his particular friends, no small part of the enjoyment he himself drank in during his five months' absence abroad. The attention and interest of the reader are enlisted from the commencement, and are secured till we reach the last page, when, on his return home late at

ight, he "awoke all the youngsters, who rushed downstairs and gave him an instant and joyous welcome." Although declaiming being either erudite or elaborate, Dr. Wallace's observations on the Biblical localities he passes through are ways appropriate and sensible. His style is homely, but vigorous. He is never wearisome, sometimes racy and original. The description of his misfortune in being confined a fortnight in quarantine is amusing and interesting, while the philosophical, or rather Christian way in which he bore his lazaretto imprisonment, and drew enjoyment from it, notwithstanding its many discomforts, if applied to the *inevitable* throughout life could often change the dark cloud into *enjoyable* though not perhaps *bright* sunshine. The book is one from which all may derive both pleasure and profit.

OUR DISPENSATION, or The Place we occupy in the Divine history of the World. By JOSIAH MILLER, M.A. *Jackson, Valford & Hodder.* This volume replies to a question of great importance, What is our Dispensation? "If this preliminary question be not thoughtfully asked and truthfully answered, we may be needlessly expending our spiritual strength to do the work of past dispensations, while we neglect the pressing claims of the present; we may miss the special privileges of our own position, and fail to rise to the sublime height for which we have a peculiar responsibility, because it is now for the first time in the history of our race accessible to men." The spirit of the book is earnest, the materials are well arranged, the subject beautifully and forcibly illustrated, while the style is vigorous and flowing. Although within small compass, "Our Dispensation" is treated with fulness. With truth Mr. Miller can say, "Thus have we gathered from different parts of the Scriptures the several statements and illustrations of the superiority of the Spirit's dispensation. The way in which the Scriptures were written—by different persons, at different times, and in various forms as histories, memoirs, poems, treatises, prophetic messages, proverbs, and letters—brought with it many advantages, but was much against systematic teaching. It was as the bringing together of material in different ways and from various countries, like the cedar floated from Lebanon, and the gold and precious stones brought in ships from Ophir, for the building of the temple. As we find our reward in faithfully using our powers

upon every possession God has given, adding value to material by skilled labour, and bringing together for use what is useless when separate,—so we receive instruction and benefit when we gather scattered teachings into a compact argument or a system, and thus use the collected materials to rear the temple of truth.”

THE HOMILETICAL TREASURY. By the REV. J. LYTH, D. D. *R. D. Dickinson.* This is the first part—Isaiah—of a scheme for presenting the Bible, divided into “heads,” for the use of preachers. We cannot but admire the labour bestowed upon the part before us, but think a few *suggestive* outlines would be more highly valued by most preachers than a volume of such brief divisions, furnishing so little for either mind or heart. “The method adopted is to give a short analysis of a whole paragraph, followed by one or more views of individual passages, according to their importance.” The following extract will give a better idea of the book than any description can.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

1-8. I. Hezekiah's need—sick unto death—Divinely admonished, etc. II. His prayer—believing—humble—sincere—earnest. III. His success—the answer immediate, gracious, conveyed through the prophet—the cure, effected by Divinely appointed means—the sign, miraculous—indisputable.

1-8. God. I. Troubles. II. Heals.

1. I. The sick king. II. The faithful prophet.

1. I. Sickness, a common lot. II. The precursor of death. III. A monitor of wisdom.

1. Set, etc. I. Why. II. How. III. When.

1. Set, etc. I. A necessary precaution. II. Its urgent necessity.

2. Prayer. I. Is available to sick as well as the healthy. Requires humiliation—privacy. Brings man in contact with God.

3. Hezekiah's plea. I. Found in God's mercy. II. Sustained conscious integrity. III. Urged his tears.

3. And Hezekiah, etc. I. The prospect of death is often a source of trouble. II. The world can offer no relief. III. The only resource is prayer.

NEW FACTS AND OLD RECORDS: A Plea for Genesis. S. R. PATTISON, F.G.S. *Jackson, Walford & Hodder.* In this pamphlet the difficulties which occur to the geologist studying Genesis are honestly met, and fairly and for the most part satisfactorily dealt with. Scripture and science viewed as they always should be. “We will not speak of *reconciliation*; they are brothers, who have never differed. Let us take time to learn their language, and we shall find even so.”

St. Paul's Episode on Love.

PART III.

Beneficence and Self-Sacrifice, nothing without Love.

and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."—1 Cor. 13.

Beneficence without love profits us nothing.

This verse is an illustration of the remark previously made, that the word "charity," owing to the change in meaning it has undergone, is now inadequate to express the idea which the apostle seeks to convey by the word *ἀγάπη*: for here he contrasts it with what the word "charity" now most generally means. It is the tendency of most all words, after the lapse of time, to convey a less meaning than they originally bore. But so great is the change that this word "charity" has undergone since the translation of the Bible, that in some respects it is the opposite of what it signified when first employed by our translators. It was then used to denote what was earnest and fervid, most warm and loving; whereas it is often employed to designate what is formal and cold, as in the colloquial phrase, "as cold as charity."

In the days of our Lord and the apostle, the word corresponding to righteousness (*δικαιοσύνη*) was applied by the Jews to such acts of beneficence as the apostle here describes, and the act of almsgiving stood for the virtue of which it was only one of the outward forms. Against this error our Lord protests when He says, "Except your

righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." And again, "Take heed that ye do not your alms (δικαιοσύνη) before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father in heaven." Here the apostle echoes the same sentiment; "though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor . . . and have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

The exact meaning of the word translated "bestow" is *divide into morsels or mouthfuls*, and may be literally translated, "though I dole away in mouthfuls all my property." In allusion to this passage, Coleridge says, "Who that has witnessed the almsgiving in a Catholic monastery, or the court of a Spanish or Sicilian bishop's or archbishop's palace, where immense revenues are syringed away in farthings to herds of beggars, but must feel the force of the apostle's half satirical *ψωμίσω!*" With all deference, however, to so high an authority, I think that the apostle is here too full of the spirit which he is so eloquently enforcing, to entertain any feeling at all approaching what can be termed "satirical." The apostle, on the contrary, is supposing that there is a laudable and painstaking distribution of property, that the giver does not merely bestow it in one lump to some institution or object—an easy way of getting rid of the duties of stewardship, but that he personally discharges the important duty of giving away what God has entrusted to him. This is a duty which is often neglected, but one worthy of our best attention. It is not enough that we give. Money given away in charity, if unwisely given, may be worse than thrown away. We must be careful that it be distributed to suitable subjects, and to

sh severally as he needs. It is not enough either that distinguish between genuine and spurious claims upon beneficence ; we should judge also of their comparative portance and necessities. It is not enough that we give every man a penny, or a shilling, or a crown. To me it may be wise to give but the penny ; to others should contribute silver, and to others gold. Oftentimes more good is done by lifting a poor man or a poor family out of a state of dependence and want by a judicious outlay of a few pounds, than if double the sum were syringed away in pennies or sixpences.

But even supposing that this duty be conscientiously discharged, that up to the measure of your ability you give away, and up to the measure of your knowledge and wisdom you personally look to the proper distribution of your property ; yet if it be done without love, done from motives like those that influenced the Pharisee or the Mussulman, who confounded such deeds with virtue and righteousness,—or of the Roman Catholic, who hopes to earn peace and happiness thereby,—or from motives of personal vanity or the like,—and it be not done from *love*, profiteth nothing ; God looks upon no act as pleasing except it be done from love,—love to Him, and love to man because of love to Him.

It is not for us to say how far this love must be exclusively love to Christ—that motive power which is the source of all good in the Christian. In some cases, there may be the true spirit of Christian love where there is no consciousness of acting out of regard to the will of Christ,—yea even where there is no knowledge of Jesus Christ, or of His great love. The alms, for instance, of Cornelius were accepted by God, though he had not yet

found Him who was the Saviour of the world and the Exemplar of all true love. "Thy prayers and thine ~~alms~~ are come up for a memorial before God." Peter ~~had~~ hitherto narrowed too much the kingdom of God; ~~but~~ after he had reflected on the vision vouchsafed to Cornelius, as well as the vision that passed before his ~~own~~ eyes, he was constrained to remark, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."

Giving in the spirit of love is to be recommended, ~~not~~ only for the sake of the giver, but also for the sake of those who receive, that it may more abundantly profit them. In the case of habitual beggars, it matters little to them whether your giving be accompanied with roughness or with kindness. In too many cases such ~~are~~ steeled against either frown or kindly welcome. Kind and loving words fall upon the naked rock perhaps with as much effect as upon their ears. But different is it with the family whom the want of employment or the sickness of the breadwinner has left in hunger and cold. Different is it with that poor man, the head of a family perhaps, who comes to you with a load of depression on his heart, with timidity playing on his lips and the blush of shame betrayed on his face, but forced to come to you by the cold and hunger of those near and dear to him at home. You cannot feel in your heart to turn him away without offering him something. But what you bestow, perhaps, is cold charity; and he goes away with his heart wounded, his self-respect he imagines injured, but forced to submit to the degradation by the anxious looks of the wife that are ever haunting him, and the cries of

little ones that are ever sounding in his ears. How different would that man feel if love to him as a brother—prompted the gift, and love pervaded every word addressed to him, and in this way you convinced him that to help him was for you a pleasure and a privilege. Instead of going away from you dejected, ashamed, perhaps soured, he would depart with a thankful mind, full heart, and with the conviction that he is not altogether friendless and uncared for in the world.

I. Self-sacrifice without love profits nothing. “And though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, profiteth me nothing.”

There is some uncertainty about the original word that were rendered “burned.” That word (*καυθήσωμαι*) is in sound and form very similar to the word *καυχήσωμαι*, that I may boast.” Nothing can be conceived of as more natural than that the writer of the MSS., in transcribing from sight or dictation, should make the mistake of substituting the one word for the other. MSS. are almost equally divided between the two readings.* If we consider the reading *καυχήσωμαι* to be the true one, the clause must be translated “though I

The comparative merits of the two readings may be briefly stated thus: For *καυχήσωμαι*, that I may boast, it is urged—(1) There is no such word *καυθήσωμαι*; (2) This is the reading of the Æthiopic and Coptic versions, and B; (3) Burning, though a common punishment in after times, was prevalent when this epistle was written. For the reading of received MSS. there are the authorities C, D, G, and the Latin MSS.; and against the other reading (*καυχήσωμαι*) Alford urges the objections—“ (1) It leaves *δω* standing with a very vague and undefined meaning—deliver to what? (2) It introduces an irrelevant and confused element, a *boastful motive*, a set of hypotheses which put forward merely an act, or set of acts, on one side, and the absence of love on the other.”

give my bodily ease that I might boast, or have occasion for boasting." The object of the apostle would be to show that though he sacrificed not only his goods but his bodily ease and comfort for others' benefit, and did it not from love, it would profit him nothing. The reference would be to the life of hardship he led by his great privations and labours, and the determination to maintain himself by his own hands which he makes the especial subject of his boasting in another part of this epistle: "I have used none of these things; for it were better for me to die than that any man should make my glorying (boasting) void" (1 Cor. ix. 15).

We prefer for several reasons retaining the reading to which we have been long accustomed, "though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." Whether it be the thought the apostle wished to express or not, most certainly it is true.

The apostle has reference here, no doubt, to such spurious martyrdoms as took place from time to time in the early Church, not so much for conscience sake from vanity, the spirit of opposition, or from passion. Many instances of self-immolation, of this description would be well known to the apostle Paul. Pagan and Jewish history afforded many; and in every age since then illustrations of it are to be found. Men have surrendered themselves to the cruelest death, not from love to God, or love for truth and justice, or love for their fellow-men, but from the delusion that they would thereby win a conspicuous place in heaven, or wipe away some crime that in earlier life stained their characters and ruined their peace.

In the present day we are sadly reminded of the fact

That persons are found ready to sacrifice their lives, and the lives of others too, from motives that are ignoble, and for objects profitless. It was more from hatred than from love, that those wretched Fenians a few months ago threw the city and whole country into an unwonted state of irritation by their diabolical explosion, and braved the danger of meeting an ignominious death as the penalty of their hardihood. And possibly they may even boast of their crime as something commendable and meritorious. All such surrendering of the body to death profiteth nothing. It benefits neither themselves nor others.

But different is it with those martyrs who have been brought to the stake because of their love of truth ; or who have exposed their bodies to contagion and disease, to the arrow of the savage, or the instruments of torture, from love to precious souls ; or who have given their bodies to be slain with the sword, in upholding the rights of a persecuted and down-trodden country. Such martyrdoms have ever been blessed of God ; they have profited the cause the sufferers had at heart. The blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the Church. From the ashes of the charred body there has sprung up a living power which has defied the persecutor's fire to consume ; while it no less has profited him who made the sacrifice. His name has become a household word ; his sayings are cherished in many a heart ; His memory is revered through many ages ; while at the final day he will be the recipient of a special reward. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Learn from this passage what services and sacrifices are *truly profitable*—those only that are prompted by love. How strikingly does this teach us the truth that God's

ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as ours, that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, that the world's maxims apply not to the principles that regulate His government. Nothing is more common than to hear the word "love" put in *opposition* to "profit." We hear that one does certain duties not for profit, but from love. Our text shows us, however, that what is done from love is *alone* truly profitable. Beware of carrying worldly maxims into the domain of religious truth. Carry religious principles into business life. That will be wise, and in the highest sense profitable. But worldly maxims lamentably fail, when applied to the kingdom of heaven. There the first shall be last, and the last first.

If your services and sacrifices are to profit you, let your motive be always high. Let that which prevails upon you to give your property, to surrender your ease and comfort to others, not be the desire of gaining men's approbation. Let it not be either importunity or emulation. Let it not be merely because others give, and it would be mean in you to withhold. This has ever had its influence in stimulating benevolence; and it is well that it should. A man who can see others give wisely and judiciously to the poor, or to religious or charitable purposes, and is not thereby shamed into giving, is no man, is lacking lamentably in self-respect. But the lesson this passage teaches us is that in all our giving we should be swayed by a higher and holier motive—by LOVE.

Bromley, Kent.

D. L.

Misread Passages of Scripture.

BY THE REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

IV.

Law and Life.

“In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.”—ECCLES. xi. 3.

THERE are few passages in the word of God which are more constantly misapplied than this. It is systematically wrested to the establishment of doctrines with which it has nothing whatever to do. The popular interpretation of the text treats it as equivalent to the assertion, that the condition of the human soul through its long eternity is settled absolutely and irrevocably by death. We believe that nine out of ten of those who hold this doctrine, would quote this passage if they were suddenly asked to sustain their belief out of the word of God. With the truth of the doctrine in question, we are not dealing in the present discourse; there are passages in the word of God which bear on it with most unquestionable cogency. But this is not one of them. Our present purpose is to show what it *does* mean, and that its reference is to a subject which is well nigh as far removed from that on which it is supposed to bear as the poles.

We approach a dread, an awful subject, when we contemplate the condition of those who pass into the unseen world impenitent and faithless, who despise finally, as far as we can trace, the riches of the mercy and the love of God. It is a subject which is occupying the most earnest and solemn thoughts of some of the wisest of our Christian thinkers, and on which a large freedom of judgment will have to be conceded within the visible pale of the Christian Church. It is easy to state the doctrine of universalism, and to offer it as a solution of the dark difficulties with which the subject is surrounded.

But it is not easy to get the doctrine of universalism out of the Bible; nay it is not possible, without grievous violence to some of its plainest and most awful statements: nor, on the other hand, is it easy to harmonize it with any intelligent conceptions of the moral freedom and responsibility of every child of the human race. Others seek refuge, for it is as a refuge that they appear to cling to it, in the theory of annihilation—that is, the annihilation on a vast scale of that which God made to be His masterpiece, which He constituted in His own image, and into which He infused by inspiration the breath of His own life. More grievous violence must be done to the plain language of Scripture by the advocates of this theory than by those of the former; and it seems to us still harder to find for it a place in any intelligent and harmonious conception of the scheme on which God made the worlds.

Were it possible for us to hold it, it would seem to unfold a terrible vision of the issue of the great experiment of creation. The free beings whom God made to be the glory of His universe, dropping down in throngs, after a life struggle full of anguish and despair, into the darkness of the everlasting night! One would be tempted to ask passionately in that case, Why was not the dire experiment of liberty ended in the hour of the first transgression? why was not the free universe, parent of such wrongs and miseries, strangled in its birth?

Nor may we dare to hide from ourselves and others, in these days, the dread considerations involved in the doctrine which the Church has drawn from explicit statements in the word of God. Eternal punishment; eternal suffering in the universe; moans rising up ever in the ear of heaven; the cries of souls in anguish piercing the serenity of the heavenly rest. Eternal evil too. Evil never more to die out of the worlds on which the dew of the primal benediction lay, and which flashed back the smile of Him who looked upon them and saw that "they were very good." The curse rioting, sin

Reigning unto death, in some region of the universe sustained and ruled by the Divine hand; never to be expelled from the creation, never to be drawn under the merciful reign of God. We are too prone to hide the awful reality which is behind this language, by vague notions of the judgment as the final banishing of evil from the sight of God and of the blessed. Nothing that is can be banished from the sight of God; nothing that exists—we will not say lives, life is a sacred word—can exist from moment to moment without the interposition of the Divine hand. Ever present before the great Father must be the anguish and the moans of the souls in torment; ever to His eye there must be this dark counterfoil to the joy and glory of the redeemed. And yet the question forces itself upon us: what else can the plain statements of the Scriptures mean, nay what else can in the essential nature of things befall a free spirit that chooses to exercise its freedom in sin? We may well feel with a wise one of old, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for us: it is as high as heaven, what can we do? it is as deep as hell, what can we know?”

Sore difficulties beset us in working out a clear and harmonious theory of the judgment and its issues. But blessed be God that we can rest in the belief that all will be, in ways that we see not, so wisely and righteously ordered by the Judge of all the earth, as to satisfy the yearning heart, not of the great Father only, but of the Redeemer of humanity, and to fill the universe with praise. Here as elsewhere, when we are bewildered and perplexed by thoughts too high for us and which reach too far, we find a sure refuge and rest in faith. We believe God in Christ, and we can leave our future and the future of humanity in His hand. Meanwhile, our work, our duty is clear: “*Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*” “*This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*” “*Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus*

Christ." *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."*

But this is beside the scope of the present discourse. I have to consider what these words, so strangely misapplied, do mean, and to draw from them those most pregnant lessons concerning the conduct of life which they are intended to afford. *"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth. If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be. He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."*

I. The key to the passage, the broad idea which underlies the whole, is in the first verse. In the sixth verse the writer repeats the thought under a varied form, and it is evident that it rules the whole. Let us ask ourselves what it means. It is a fair question whether we have here a reference to a popular proverb descriptive of the most useless and apparently hopeless work, "casting bread upon the waters," or whether there is a reference to Egyptian husbandry, which might seem just as futile a method, did not experience prove that a harvest of splendid abundance is the well-nigh certain result. I do not think that it is needful to settle the rival claims of the two interpretations,* inasmuch as the essential point of the author's meaning

* Those who wish to settle the critical question will find ample help in Dr. Ginsburg's learned and exhaustive "Commentary on Ecclesiastes." (Longmans, 1861.)

lved in both. In either case you have a husbandry ; and in either case you have a grand image of all piritual work. All husbandry is of faith to an ex- nch we little realize, but most especially this hus- . The seed-corn scattered from the hand vanishes ght, the very bed in which it is hidden lies buried, a uncongenial impenetrable element spreads its between the sower and the seed, which he must a the hands of God. The farmer who has ploughed d and settled his seed in the furrows feels less t from it; he sees at least where it lies, he can condition, he can trace the first green bloom on own surface of his fields, which is the prophecy and dge of harvest. But seed cast into the waters ! is it? who can trace it? what can withhold the from rotting it, and burying the promise of the nd the hope of the husbandmen in their depths? e seed dropped into the furrows of the human seed- he heart that has been broken up by the deep share of God's discipline, and over which a fertiliz- od of quickening influences has passed,—where lies hat glance can follow it? What hand can touch it? eye can foresee, what brain can forecast, its destiny? is a dread likeness here, to the eye of the under- ag, between this perilous husbandry and spiritual ; man's knowledge is so limited, man's hand is so ess, the seed passes so far out of his ken, and lies in such deep depths within.

re is a mystery in all husbandry which it is manifestly rpose of God to keep clearly before the eye of the He will not suffer us to forget it. “ *And he said, the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed he ground; and should sleep, and rise night and nd the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth w. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; e blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he in the sickle, because the harvest is come.*” (Mark iv.

26-29.) This is the daily miracle of nature, the "sign" which is done daily before our eyes. There are those, and they constitute a large and powerful school of thinkers in our day, who refuse coldly to listen to any evidence as to the miracles of Scripture, and who see this sign of an unseen energy at work around them and within them each moment, but feel powerless even to inquire from what fountain it springs. It is deeply unjust to brand the Positivist school of philosophy as explicitly either materialistic or atheistic. They are by no means blind to the fact that there is a hidden mystery in nature; they see quite as clearly as we do its marvellous depths. There is something quite as wonderful in their sight in the daily growth of the corn and the assimilation of our daily bread, as in the feeding of five thousand in the lonely wilderness by the word which came forth from the mouth of the Saviour. But they say, this region is simply impenetrable by the human intellect; in all its efforts at discovery, it simply meets with shadows, projected under various conditions and at various angles by itself. Our fair charge against them is, not that they are blind to the fact of a mystery in nature, but that they dishonour the royal faculty of the reason with which God has gifted them, by distrusting its ability to deal with a vast class of phenomena—the manifestations of the working of unseen powers with which God has surrounded them—which are as definite and substantial as the physical facts out of which they educe their laws. The world of spiritual experience and activity with which mainly the Bible deals, claims from us at any rate observation, thought, and deduction, as reverent as that which we joyfully devote to the phenomena of nature; and we accept as eagerly the thoughts and suggestions of seers, who have insight into this world of mystery, as we accept the teachings of science concerning things which are beyond our sight. And if words come to us from this higher sphere, which harmonize discordant elements and make the chaos of our spiritual consciousness and experience

is ruled by intelligence and love, we joyfully receive the truth which sustains and explains the phenomenon and feel that in proclaiming it we are "holding forth the word of life" to our fellow-men. And the Scripture is to us a flash of sunlight, which illumines the darkness of the unknown : we see unveiled the Hand working each moment these signs and wonders around us ; and, studying the nature, the mind, the life, by which that Hand is guided, we find rest in the assurance that the power whose awful manifestation might well appal and overwhelm us is under the gentle rule of One whose declaration of Himself is Love. We receive an emancipation from both idols and the idols of the imagination, when we learn that the daily bread of our lives comes to us from the hand of God, and is crowned with His benediction. The simple people perceive it quite simply : they have a beautiful sense of dependence on the Hand which feeds the birds and the lilies. As a child hangs on the mother's breast, they hang daily as trustfully on the bounty of God. And they are more free from vain fancies than the philosophers. It is the wise and the simple who are in bondage to idols : simple hearts, which have received the revelation of the relations of the two worlds, which the Bible offers, walk free in the sun and dwell quiet from the fear of evil.

thy bread upon the waters : for thou shalt find it many days."

The main point here then is, that in all husbandry there are two elements—the intelligence and energy of the sower, and the co-operation of a secret force, the power of which and the methods of which escape him, on which absolutely depend all his fruits. Neither the one nor the other can produce the harvest. Paul plants, waters ; but God giveth the increase : but neither Paul's planting does the harvest spring. "*Be-
nearer went forth to sow.*" The human sower is, as we see, the indispensable fellow-worker with the

Most High God. But God, and not the human sower, has the absolute control of the result.

Let us look at this more closely. To impress this upon us is the main object of the writer in the text.

II. The writer of this book asks us to consider how much that has the most important bearing on the results of our activity is hopelessly beyond the control of our hand.

No doubt this is a truism: but it is the meaning and force of these truisms which most easily escapes us; custom is the blind of truth. No matter what it may be to which we put our hands, we are dealing with elements which only partially subject themselves to our control, or rather reveal to us the secret by which they may be bent to our use. Always there is a large variable element in the problem of our activities; and on this variable element, which we have no means of calculating, depends all that is most precious and vital in our results. Husbandry here is the great witness for, and key to, higher things. Certain bases are fixed and unalterable; else our work would be a pure lottery. Much on which its fruits depend is variable; else our work would be purely mechanical. God gives us a large measure of assurance, that we may work bravely and put our hearts into our labour, as those who have a right to hope that they will carry the sheaves of their harvest home; but He crosses our toil with a zone of uncertainties, that we may be faithful workmen, trusting and praying as well as working, and may be kept in holy and blessed dependence on Him who can lift us above all servile care for immediate results. Consider—

1. The awful force and inevitable certainty of the processes of Nature, the unfailing "order of Nature" which furnishes forth the field of our toils. That order God guarantees. The assurance is thus expressed: "*While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease*" (Gen. viii. 22). That word of promise which has nursed the trembling hope of man into strong cer-

y—for he is as sure that the sun will rise on the mor-
as he is of his own existence—lies at the foundation
his steady activity as a workman in this lower world.
joyful outgoings of the morning and evening, and
uccession of the seasons, are given to him as the con-
elements in his husbandry. These are assured to
by the voice that called them into being and the
which sustains their motions. God tells him that
ay count absolutely on this order. And what gua-
e, when we come to think of it, have we of that
, but such as a firm belief in an intelligent Ruler of
niverse, who sympathises with the hopes and blesses
oils of His children, affords? Then further,—

There is the absolutely certain sequence of physical
s and effects, or antecedents and consequents, which
all laws of nature, which vary not one hair's breadth
their ordained order in obedience to the mandates
r will, but which, by observing and mastering the
iple of that order, we can use for the accomplish-
of our ends. These are our tools to work with.
ousand subtle laws are concerned in every process
e husbandman's toils. On a large scale and in the
run the question of his success depends absolutely
is comprehension and observance of those laws.
progress of man's knowledge of nature is really a
ess in the mastery of the variable element in the
em of his labour. A thousand accidents, which
the ignorant and careless husbandman, obey the
ol of the intelligent and strenuous. The order is
There is an awful sternness in its certainty; but
ows benign to him who has mastered its secret. It
him as a servant, it helps him as a friend; and the
inty with which he can calculate its action is one
tial element of its friendliness. If he could not
the materials and measure the forces which are
antly around him, if he could not count on their
n relations and actions with the same calm certainty
which he expects the sunrise to light him to his

daily toils, his life would be one of miserable dependence—he would live the serf of nature, and not her king. It is the unalterable fixity of relations and forces which God has given him the power to discover and to employ which constitutes the royalty of his rule over nature; if that be destroyed or shaken, his crown rolls in the dust. The constancy of the relations and forces of the universe, their impassibility to the force which man's will can bring to bear upon them, of which his husbandry gives him full experience, is an essential element, perhaps we might say, *the* essential element in that higher culture which the earth offers to his spirit; it is this which makes the life of even the workman something higher than a lottery, and the toils of earth an education for the works and the joys of heaven.

3. The writer of this book, while he sees this grand calm, and constant order very clearly, and appreciates its ministry to man, has a dark sad vision of the uncertainties which cross it—the strength and magnitude of the variable element in nature and in life, which perplexes and baffles the strenuous workman, keeps him constantly on the tenter-hooks of anxiety, and not seldom rends his heart with anguish, and lays his fairest and proudest achievements in ruins in the dust. A certain order is there, and men can see it. Yes, men say,—and especially oriental men in whose climate the destructive agencies often run riot—but there is a dire disorder, and the disorder triumphs. Who knows the pathway of the storms, the earthquake, the lava floods, the drought, and the deluge? who knows and rules their times? The fairest homesteads are made desolate in a moment; verdant beauty as of Eden vanishes, and blasting and burning as of Sodom reigns in its room. There are malignant powers in the universe which seem to watch all beauty and increase, that they may make it their prey. Do not men in all ages tremble as they rejoice in prosperity? do not the proverbs of all nations warn us that trouble in such moments is near? There is a hand unseen which deals destruction to our

harvests and homesteads, in the moment when they smile on us most gaily ; and we are powerless to resist it ; we can but sit like Job on the dunghill of our ruined fortunes and bemoan ourselves, and it may be curse the day which sent us forth to till such a treacherous seed-field as this. The dearest things, the things which we love most tenderly, the possession of which is our life, may be struck down in a moment, the delight of our eyes laid low at a stroke ; we may plead and pray, we may wrestle with God in a frenzy of supplication : the hand which grasps our treasure is pitiless ; pass a few days, we shall be standing tearless and defiant by the grave of our beloved. Pagans exclaim against their gods as treacherous, and refuse them service. Catholics revenge themselves by cashiering their saint. Nay, the same brutal instinct may be found in Protestant England : I have heard of a farmer, whose harvest was all ruined, sticking a rotten sheaf in the hedge and leaving it there, to make, as he said, God Almighty ashamed. We shudder at the blasphemy ; but it is only a coarse expression of the anguish of the helpless in the hand of a power which seems inexorable and merciless, which crosses their most settled purposes, destroys ruthlessly their most precious harvests, and murders all their brightest joys. *“If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth : and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be. He that observeth the wind shall not sow ; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child : even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand : for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good”* (ver. 3-6). There is a power at work behind the veil which may at any moment cross our purpose by some unexpected stroke, which gives to us no account of its methods, and which allows no court

of appeal from its decrees. The tree falls, and who can foresee when it may fall? And when it falls, it cares not what it crushes, and the wrecks of it strew our faire fields, and bury our golden harvests in the dust.

III. What then? There being this law of calamity at work, defying all calculation and all defence, what the true policy of life?

There are mainly two policies of life; the stoic and the Christian. The Stoic says,—Everything is beyond my control, but myself. There is a kingdom whose scepter can never be wrested from my hand. *Things* are certain enemies of my peace. I will make myself independent of *things*. I will reduce my relations with things outside me to a minimum. I am surer of a crust than of a banquet; so I will train myself to care only for a crust; a crust of food, a crust of wealth, a crust of friendship will be enough for me. I will fold the cloak of my manhood around me, and shake myself free of all dependence on fickle fortune and mortal friends.

The Christian says,—Everything is beyond my control, but myself. So far, he and the Stoic are at one. But he reflects that what is beyond HIS control is not beyond GOD'S control. This law of calamity obeys the rule of One who has given the most solemn and awful pledge that He loves me as a friend and treats me as a child. He would not have me adopt the demeanour and policy of an orphan cast in a storm, but of a child at home. I will throw my nature open to the sunlight. I will make myself as rich as possible in all good and beautiful possessions, and surround myself with troops of friends. It is the will of Him who rules my life that I should do so; He made me with all these affections and sympathies; He made me to feel life a blessing. I will work, and be glad, and live, and love, according to His will; and trust, not my own hardness, but in His Father's mercy, to spare me over-much pain, and to make my life in some due measure a joy. Here are the two policies. How does the text decide? "*Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.*" "E

*clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the
th: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the
th, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be."*
*in the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold
thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper,
er this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."*
The argument is, God who made you to toil, to till the
ground, and to till the more difficult and perilous seed-field
of domestic, social, and political life, made the world thus.
In your vocation as a workman, and the field of your
toil, with the conditions of that labour, are ordained by
God. There must then be an essential harmony. One
wise and intelligent Being is the author of the whole
system; and this law of calamity is not at war with your
vocation, but is also its minister, and in deep and far-
reaching ways is working with you to your ends. It is
not, according to the dark pagan theory, the work of a
malign spirit, strong enough to break in and make the
nesteads and the lives, which God has made his charge,
treck. "*I form the light and create darkness; I make
peace and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things.*"
It is all the work of one hand, and that a wise and loving
Hand. Work on, work bravely, work gaily; storms may
deepen your fields, and shadows may darken your homes;
but no calamity, inward or outward, is unto death. The
frost and blight of this year will swell the bulk of next
year's harvests; and the deeper cares and sorrows of our
earthly husbandry but load us with an increase which
years lay up in the garner of eternity. Practically,
the husbandman finds it to be so. Making the fullest
allowance for all the crosses, the storms, the blights, the
inconstancy of Nature and of man, the balance is still amply
in the side of the faithful workman. Year by year man's
age advances; the wilderness and the solitary place is
made glad by his toil, and the desert rejoices and blossoms
like the rose. This means that a wise and loving Hand
holds all the disturbing forces under control, and fixes
their bounds where they instruct and stimulate, but never

on a grand scale scare and paralyse mankind. The losses and the crosses of the croupier of the gaming table are borne with profound patience, for there is a certain chance in his favour which must inevitably in the long run fill his coffers with gain. How calmly, how joyously, should we work on through our storms and sorrows, who have, not a margin of security guaranteed by the theory of probabilities, but the certainty of an abundant and glorious harvest, if we are faithful and patient, guaranteed by the living God.

And do not pervert the teaching of the Scripture by narrowing its scope. It does not say,—Work, for the work is good for you; results are nothing. It says rather,—Work, for God is working with you, and results are His care. The Lord does not say,—Take no thought for the morrow, for these cares of food, and clothes, and health, are sordid; despise them, and think exclusively of higher things. Quite other, and infinitely more wise and tender, is His teaching,—Do not be distracted by cares, “*for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things,*” and how He furnishes those who trust Him let the birds and the lilies declare. “*Cast thy bread upon the waters,*” for there is One watching it who will bring it back after many days. “*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*” “*He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless*”—doubtless because the Lord of the harvest assures it—“*come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*”

Three practical principles, which indicate the Christian policy of life, I gather from the text:—

1. Do not be afraid of giving with bountiful hand, lest your charity should be wasted. Scatter your gifts freely: “*freely ye have received, freely give.*” “*He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed,*” blessed with the blessedness of Christ, and like Christ he shall gather in rich harvests. Sow your gifts as the husbandman scatters the seed in his furrows, leaving it with God to watch it, to bless its springing, to ripen its fruit. Much of our charity, our

to bless mankind, must seem to be futile. The doors close on it, it vanishes from sight and touch, it is long we think in the depths. No. I think that the discovery of the unknown fruit of the patient efforts and the loving sacrifices for men, which on earth seemed to be wasted, will be one of the purest and intensest of eternity.

Do not be afraid of working, lest your toil should be less. There is no fruitless labour. Every hammer-blow on the forge of duty welds something which will last eternity. Work with a will then, with a courage, energy, a hope, to which heaven lends its inspiration; believe that nothing is so sure in the universe as harvest. This seed of your toil may be stolen, that may be crushed, that may be blighted when it is set for sowing; but the grand sum of your labour is beyond the grasp of the Harpies. God guards it, God quickens it, God and angels will rejoice with you when one day you bring your golden harvest home.

Do not be afraid of loving, because every love is a germ of pain. Throw wide the doors of your heart to all comers in the name of the Lord. The sorrows will come, but the joys will overflow them. Count yourself as you are rich in love. Keen sorrow it must bring, but with it superabounding joy. Ask God to hallow your love, and to consecrate your crosses, and the pain is purged of all its bitterness; it is but the first throb of a great unspeakable joy, which will play like sunlight on your life in the homes where the weary are for ever at rest.

Foreign Pulpit.

THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING.

BY M. LE PASTEUR E. DE PRESSENSÉ, PH. D.

(TRANSLATED BY REV. R. S. ASHTON, B.A.)

CHAPTER II.

Consolation.

“ He hath carried our sorrows.”—ISA. liii. 4.

THIS is a world of suffering ; such is the summing up of our first discourse. No long process of argument was needed, to convince you that human life, when left to itself, is full of weariness and sadness. Be silent for one moment, and you will hear a general and unceasing cry rising heavenwards—earth’s note in the universal concert. Indeed, you need only listen to your own heart. No matter who you are, you are either threatened with suffering, or actually subject to it. You have been smitten, or you know that you will be ; and when life’s wave really rises from the depths of the soul, it always flows forth in tears, for its spring is bitter. We have not drawn a sensational picture ; we have simply said, Look around and remember ! You who are afflicted know full well that in the day of your desolation nothing extraordinary befalls you. It is happiness which astonishes you, and not affliction. And yet you have not been able to form the habit of suffering *without hope* ; everything in you protests against an irremediable misfortune. Are you mistaken ? This is the inquiry we wish now to institute. Be sure of this, that you are not mistaken unless you have formed too low an idea of consolation. If you count on a complete deliverance, no matter how lofty your aspirations, your hopes may be realized. Comfort your hearts and minds with the thought that

everything in regard to happiness may be recovered. We do not offer you an imperfect consolation; this would but serve to increase your distress, by adding to it the bitterest deception. If I could not lay before you a source of real comfort, I would be silent, so great is my fear of aggravating your sufferings by worthless palliatives, and of adding poison to a wound for which I have no sovereign balm. If I do not refrain from this attempt to comfort you, it is because I know in whom I have believed.

Let us call to mind the cause of the disease which we have to heal, so that we may thoroughly understand the nature of the remedy! If our misfortune simply consisted in having lost the true knowledge of God, everything would be set right so soon as by means of a supernatural revelation we had regained true notions respecting Him. But it is far otherwise: we are mortally wounded, there is a void in our heart, we have lost eternal life. Floods of light thrown upon my misery would not lessen it, they would only blind my diseased eyes. An explanation of suffering, though given by God, would be of no avail; it would leave me just as I am, but with despair in addition; and it is truly of such cold and powerless light that we are justified in saying that it is cursed by such as find it. Pray do not enlighten me therefore, if you cannot comfort me, and be not so cruel as to tear away the bandage which still affords me some delusion. If light, and that too Divine light, will only increase my torment, what shall we think of the glimmering light of human systems? Away, you who theorize about suffering, and can do no more than descant upon it: away! for in the time of weeping we cannot endure your reasonings. If you have no means of delivering us, if you have nothing but sententious phrases to offer, put your hands on your mouths; enwrap yourselves in silence! It is enough to suffer; but to suffer and listen to you is more than we can bear. If Job's mouth was nigh unto blasphemy, the blame is yours, ye miserable

comforters, who talked instead of weeping. If I must suffer, then I pray for suffering without fine talk !

Besides, we know well the consolations of human wisdom. Through the course of ages they have not varied; they may be summed up in these two counsels : forget your suffering, or subdue it by proud resignation. The first is the epicurean method ; and though it has altered its form, its language, and its name, it has not ceased to pass from mouth to mouth. The second is the stoical method, and is as universal and undying as pride. Neither the one nor the other has comforted or strengthened a single heart. Forget ! It is easy to say so ; but do you not see that the very effort to which I must give myself will render the thought I want to dispel more bitter and piercing ? Suppose I succeed in the attempt, do you not perceive how much I shall lose by this cowardice ? I shall deny all that is highest and noblest in my nature ; it is the very best part of myself which is the source of suffering—the feeling of imperfection, the thirst for the ideal and the infinite, the distressing intuition of the tragic reality of human existence, or the tender and hallowed memory of a well-beloved being who has disappeared from the land of the living. Are there not in your heart hallowed griefs which you are unwilling to forego, because you know that if you lost them you would feel yourselves of less worth and importance ? Were any one to offer you the cup of intoxicating pleasure as you stand by the grave which has just received the mortal remains that were so dear to you, you would indignantly reject it. Yet this is what the world does, in regard to a far greater and deeper source of grief. The human soul is destitute of God ; this is the secret of its sadness and unrest. Now worldly life is so ordered as to make it forget both its torment and its dignity ; it tends to hurry the soul into the outer whirl of events, to rob it of the feeling of its past greatness and of its present misery, and to plunge it into a state of feverish excitement at once vain and profitless. Leave such

Miserable comfort for low and vulgar minds, who will readily exchange a noble destiny for a life of sense; say to yourselves that forgetfulness is the soul's death, and preserve in the depths of your heart the holy wound which God alone can heal.

Stoicism, I admit, shows more respect to human dignity. Do not give way to your pain, it says to the afflicted; suffer, and if need be, die erect, showing a bold front to adversity. Prove that you are a man, and that you do not bend before the storm like a reed. But of what use will it be to dissemble your suffering? Such proud insensibility is simply an illusion; the heart is none the less distracted behind this haughty mask. The most burning tears are those which are repressed and which flow inwardly: it is with disguised sufferings as with wounds from which the blood finds no escape; they are the most difficult to cure, and the most deadly. It is vain to talk about the force of events, or the inflexible order of the universe, beneath which we must allow ourselves to be crushed without saying a word. Such playing at resignation may receive the plaudits of spectators; but who can describe our distress, when we look within and see every fiction vanish, and discover that our weariness and misery have increased? The challenge we fling at destiny is returned with cruel irony. Thus stoical pride ends in despair. It carries with it its own refutation and punishment.

Let us leave all such poor consolation, and ask how He who has bidden the weary and heavy laden come to Him has fulfilled His promise. And first of all let us bear in mind that the gospel goes back to the beginning and deals with our misery at its very source. We have pointed out a great act of rebellion as the origin of our woes. The creature separated itself from God, from Him who is life, goodness, and felicity; this is sin, this is suffering. There is nothing arbitrary in the bond that unites them; it was formed by the hand of the most holy God Himself. If this be so, it follows that it is

useless to wish to overcome suffering without overcoming sin, and that we cannot take away the latter while we allow the former to remain. If then there is any hope for the recovery of our ruined race, if any comfort is reserved for it, such comfort can only consist in the destruction of sin itself. As sin is the result of a determined act of the human will, restoration can only come through a free decree of Divine sovereignty. God has been as free in His work of salvation as in that of creation. No necessity of any kind whatsoever constrained Him to raise His fallen creature. If any one restricts himself to saying that God's love impelled Him to it, I am ready to admit this; but if the question is stated thus, Could He possibly not forgive? I answer boldly in the affirmative; for it is the right of not forgiving which constitutes the beauty of forgiveness, just as the power of not obeying constitutes in the creature the beauty of his obedience. If you make pardon a necessity, take care! You will soon come to make sin necessary. If restoration enters into the eternal plan of creation, so also does evil. It is of no use to affirm that in effect evil has brought about such a display of Divine love as could not have taken place under other conditions, and that man, on whose behalf a God humbled Himself, has attained to a degree of glory which would have been impossible without the fall. We should rejoin, How do you know? Are you acquainted with all the resources of Divine munificence? Have you sounded the depths of infinite love? Who has told you that if man had remained innocent, a less noble destiny was reserved for him than for fallen and degraded man? Who has told you that he would not have been called to an equally intimate and mysterious union with the Divinity? It is dangerous to establish the superiority of evil to good on the ground of their consequences. We will never exclaim Blessed mistake! By so doing we should impugn the law of creation; we should be sacrificing the unalterable notion of justice, and forgetting how much

the mistake has cost God to repair it. Besides, if I am not absolutely certain of the final salvation of every human being, this is enough to keep me from saying Blessed mistake! I will rather say, Unhappy mistake, which has caused so many tears and so much blood to flow, and which has peopled the world of the lost! Unhappy mistake! but one gloriously repaired by my God; for the glory of His love shines all the more brightly because of the apparently desperate condition of man after the fall. We believe therefore, that if events had followed their regular course the rebel's case would have been hopeless, he would have been lost.

Supposing sin to exist, condemnation follows as surely as effect follows cause. You can no more prevent death issuing from evil, than you can stop the ear from growing out of the grain of wheat. "When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and when sin hath conceived it bringeth forth death." This is the natural order of things. Those who will content themselves with it should know to what they bind themselves; they should know that as long as they reject the supernatural order, they will find themselves imprisoned in that iron circle which can never open of itself, and from which there is no escape till God has broken it. Now He never breaks it except by the free intervention of His love, which snaps the chain of natural effects. Do not let us narrow this great question of the supernatural, which has been so thoroughly taken up by the men of our day. When God, in the full exercise of His liberty, and in presence of the degraded being who had offended Him, and who deserved nothing short of death, held out a helping hand instead of smiting him, and thus stayed the merited condemnation, then the supernatural order invaded the natural order of things, then man could see that his God is not bound by logic, and that the Legislator is superior to His law. A God who pardons, who pardons freely, is the greatest of miracles. To make a star go back in the firmament is a poor prodigy, compared with the act of mercy which

has stayed in its course the condemnation of the race.

Tell me not of a god who cannot forsake his ear who is in a measure bound by the work of his own Such a god is the Eternal Becoming (*devenir*), the sal life which can never be apprehended amidst the fusion and dispersion of things; he has never been he has never been spoken to; he has never loved single act of love would disarrange the immutable which he is the symbol rather than the author. When he is presented to us as the monstrous idol of pantheism, made of mud and clay, or whether dwindled down into the cold and impalpable idea of reason, this pretended god reckons his worship the present moment by thousands. Every one who but one step beyond the strait path of virtue irresistibly drawn towards him. We have seen noble fall from bright regions, all aglow with the the unfettered Deity, into the cold region of necessity. Woe to any who in the present day fall from the sphere of love and adoration! Vertigo takes them, and there is no stopping them in their fall. I am perfectly sure that when I can no longer find in the living God and in the supernatural order of things based on His free love, on that very day I shall cease and shall regard it as nothing better than the dream of a fruit, fit only to be trodden under foot.

Let us come back to the God of our conscience God of the gospel, who is the God of the living; let us consider what He has done to save us. Sin and evil have just entered the world. A free course lies open to their destructive agency. The God who beheld the work of His hands on the seventh day, and said, "Let all very good," has beheld it again; and lo! it is evil—everything, from the sky covered with a sadness to the earth which bringeth forth thorn-bearing things, from the countless beings which the principle of disorder has set in arms one against another to the

and woman who walk, weeping as they go, along a path on which the curse has fallen, and who hide their confusion beneath the trees of the garden, the witnesses of their rebellion. Yes, everything was very evil: servile fear, instead of security and happiness; a desert, instead of a paradise; death, instead of life; corruption, instead of innocence; and already a confused clamour arose from this rebellious world. Then a voice was heard in the heavens; it was the voice of Him who leaves the ninety and nine sheep, to go after the poor lost one,—of Him who does not forsake the prodigal son but waits for him. It was an august and merciful voice, the same which had spoken to the void, and the void had answered; and this voice said, “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people.” We would say with the prophet, “Hear, O ye heavens, and give silence, O earth”; and ye happy spirits who live with God, and have never left Him, be ye confounded. Ye have never seen a manifestation of love equal to this! Ye have witnessed the wonders of creative love; and in your radiant beauty and pure splendour ye are yourselves its most perfect work. Well, ye have seen nothing, nothing comparable with what ye are about to witness! This language, addressed to these poor and contemptible beings, is more than all that the universe has heard; it is more than the word which called forth the light and bade the first dawn arise; for it is the language of pardon. Here is not only a God who raises beings up towards Himself, but also one who humbles Himself towards fallen beings, and who does this simply because He wills to do so, and without in any wise affecting His perfect right to punish. “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people.”

If we are to accept a certain theology, the whole of redemption was effected on the day when the word of pardon was uttered. According to it, there is no necessity for anything serious and painful to be transacted between God and man. Pardon brings salvation to every man who accepts it, and revelation has no other end than to assure us of this pardon. The flowers at our

feet, and the azure sky above our heads, proclaim gloriously, and the cross can only repeat it with greater energy. Thus, reconciliation is merely a declaration of Divine love. Christianity does not present the consolation which it offers, under such smiling aspects, for human conscience could not believe in such a redemption. God's rights are inscribed in the conscience; it knows that there has been a frightful disturbance of the relations between the Creator and the creature. Sin rises between it and God; and as long as sin remains, the door of access is not open. Of what use is it therefore to be pardoned, says the guilty man, if I cannot lay hold of pardon? Rebellion has hollowed out an abyss between God and myself, and you cannot help me to cross it by flinging a few flowers into it; it must be filled and how can this be done except by an act of reparation. It is well if God is willing to return to man; but His merciful design cannot be realized if man himself does not return to Him, if he does not yield his heart to Him. Love implies reciprocation. God gives me His heart, but this will be useless if I do not give Him mine. We see then that consolation is freely, but not unconditionally, offered. It cannot be efficacious until the wretched man which desires to be comforted has replied to the heart which seeks to comfort, and until the formidable obstacle of sin has been removed; and this is the reason why God calls for a comforter.

Who then shall comfort this afflicted people? It cannot be one of their own children; for then we should say to them, "Comforter, comfort thyself. Physician, heal thyself. How canst thou remove the burden beneath which thou art bowed down?" The Divine call has resounded on earth in vain: no one, either sage or prophet, has come forward to answer it. It has resounded in heaven; but no heavenly spirit has accepted it. An angel could not understand us in our misfortune; a son of light knows nothing of the purest happiness; he could not represent our race; there would be no close and natural bond between

us and him. God still cries, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." At length a voice answers, a voice issuing from the throne of glory, and this voice says, "I am ready to comfort Thy people." Do you object that He who speaks thus needs Himself to be comforted? But He is the only and well-beloved Son, and before Him the heavens bow and worship. You cannot say that He is a stranger to the race He wishes to save; for it is made in His image, it enjoys a ray of His brightness in its soul; in Him it finds its perfection, for its ideal is not below but above; its destiny is not to descend, but to ascend. It was originally made to be closely united to Him. According to John's profound teaching, when He came amongst men, "he came unto his own." He alone could descend from so lofty to so low a station, and thus truly become the Son of man.

We ask you to observe that He had not to represent a race still pure and crowned with glory and honour like the angels: no, He had to represent a proscribed and unhappy race. He beheld it just as it was, without any illusion; from the height of His glory, He looked compassionately upon it in its distress and poverty. He had a burning desire to save it, precisely because it was degraded and unhappy. In His eyes this immense misfortune was an immense attraction. He wished to descend to the level of man, that He might raise him up to Himself, and thus renew the broken bond between man and God. When He said, "Here am I to comfort," it was as if He had said, "Here am I to serve, here am I to suffer, here am I to die!" He came, and He has borne our sorrows.

How feeble are all these illustrations, if we compare them with the bold expression of St. Paul, "he made himself of no reputation."* We are more and more convinced that we must accept these words in their literal

* The French rendering of the Greek words, *ἐαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν*, is *il s'est anéanti*, which means literally "he made himself nothing."

sense. The Son of God really stripped Himself of His glory in order to save us ; though rich, He became poor. His poverty was not in appearance, He really gave up all that constitutes the splendour of Divinity. Do not let us believe that the God in Him remains the impassive spectator of the humiliation of the man, and that the Divine nature hovers in regions eternally bright, while the human nature is given up to all kinds of reproaches. No : such distinctions destroy the unity of the person and the self-despoilment of Jesus Christ, thus understood is nothing but a fiction. Of what did He strip Himself if He thus retained all the glory of His Divinity ? His humanity would in that case be nothing but an outer garment ; and whether you cover it with mud or tear it His real person is not touched. He lost nothing ; but then what did He retain ? For our part, we firmly believe that by becoming man He, in so doing, limited His Divinity, He stripped Himself for a time of the infinity which had belonged to Him from all eternity, and also of His absolute self-existence, for otherwise He could neither have been born nor have died. Here is the whole mystery of the incarnation—a mystery than which there is not a greater, nor one so incapable of being explained. On the other hand, there is not one whose necessity is more clearly demonstrated to the reason of the Christian ; for if the sorrows of man must be borne in order to his being saved, then the Eternal Word can only do this by quitting (*sortir*) the honours of the Divine life ; in other words, by making Himself of no reputation. This despoiling of Himself does not in reality detract from His glory, seeing that it is a result of His will, and that to restrain one's power is still to use it. On the contrary, the more He despoils Himself, the more His glory increases, the more His love shines forth, the more resplendent is His moral royalty. But we must not descend into subtleties where the language of Scripture is clear and precise. In this Man who has “no form nor comeliness,” in this Man who appeared on our condemned

earth in the guise of a servant, let us recognise with St. Paul a God who hath humbled Himself, even the same who, according to the words of our text, hath borne our sorrows !

This is surely the Comforter we need ! For—

1. He is an *afflicted Man*, the most afflicted of all the human race, a Man of sorrows. If He wishes to sympathise, He has only to recall the past. We cannot take a single step in our gloomy path, without finding some traces of Him. We cannot light upon an affliction through which He has not passed before us. He knows what suffering is, from that which affects our bodies to that which withers our souls. O ye who lie on beds of sickness, tortured with cruel pain, He knows the nature of the physical suffering which reacts on your inner life through the delicate bonds connecting soul and body ! O ye who eat the bread of charity, and are distressed by all the cares of penury, He knows what poverty is ! The most indigent have at least had a cradle in which to be born, and a place where to lay their heads ; the Son of man was reduced to envy the birds of heaven their nests, and the foxes their holes. O ye who have been overwhelmed with reproach, calumny, insult, and mockery, He knows what ignominy is ; He knows it as you can never know it ! O ye who bend and shudder over the open tomb, He knows what sorrow is, and His hot tears fell into the tomb where His friend was laid ! O ye who mourn not only for a friend, but also for a friendship, ye from whom life, and not death, has taken a heart on which you leaned, ye who have been forsaken, ye who have seen your brother's hand raised against you, He knows what abandonment and betrayal are, He knows these things as you can never know them, — He who was sacrificed by a people whom He had loaded with His benefits, forsaken by His disciples, denied by one apostle, and sold by another ! I defy you to point out a suffering which He has not known and traversed before you. He was made like unto you in all things, except sin. He knows what sorrow is, and this

is why He can comfort. This is why those who turn to Him of whom it is said "He wept." This is why He only can heal the wounds of the human heart. This is why His heart is so gentle, so tender, so gracious; for the wounds of the human heart they have all the holy balm of tears of compassion. Afflicted ones, draw near therefore to the throne of His mercy with confidence; you have not a high-priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of your infirmities.

2. Jesus Christ has not only shared our sorrows, but He has *redeemed our sins*. Observe that He truly became man, not merely because He is its ideal, but also because He has entered into full communion with our sufferings, and made Himself partaker of its destiny. He has thoroughly entered into our sad destiny, He has placed Himself at the very centre of our calamity. He is made of our flesh and bone of our bone, the Son of God in reality because He is the Man of sorrows. At all times He is the holy and just One, whom the evil of the world has not affected (*effleuré*). By the simple fact that He came down to earth, He entered a condemnation which is borne down by the weight of God's judgments. This condemnation and these chastisements which since the fall are according to the nature of sin must affect Him at every step. He endures the curse of the nation which rests on our world according to the will of God. In this sense, He bears the penalty of our sins and the curse of God. He has thrown Himself into the midst of the battle-field; He has in some sense united us with His body, and so the chastisement which we deserved has fallen on Him. He placed His head beneath the sword of Divine justice, the simple fact of His inhabiting a world where sin and death reign. He who was without sin has become as a sinner; He has been made a curse for us all the while He was the object of the good pleasure of the Father, who did not cease to call Him His beloved Son, and who declares that He is in Him.

ciling the world unto Himself. It is precisely because He is the only man on earth who, as a representative of our race, endured a punishment which He did not deserve, and did not add a fresh sin to a fresh pain, that His suffering rises to the height of a redeeming sacrifice. "He became obedient unto death," says the apostle, "even the death of the cross." In other words, from the first step which He took in the career of suffering and condemnation even to the last, at every stage of the long road, in every period of man's sad life, He took upon Himself the condemnation which had come upon a guilty race, He performed an act of obedience, He accepted the will of His Father, He fulfilled it, He displayed the perfection of love (*il a réalisé l'amour parfait*), and in His person reconciled God and man. What is this but saying that He blotted out the transgression of the rebel by His suffering and submission, and that He cancelled the consequences of the first sin? In Him the human race was perfectly united with Divinity, through an absolute acceptance of the will of God as it is manifested in suffering and death, which are the issues of sin. It was at the uttermost bounds of our misery that He went to seek for the remedy and the deliverance; for from the day when this misery was raised to the height of a free sacrifice, it became the very means of reconciliation. By carrying our sorrows, He transformed them; and ever since they have been His sorrows, that is to say the holy sufferings of a love obedient even unto the death of the cross, they have been a source of peace and consolation on earth. His tears are the only dew that has fertilized a world subject to the curse. His death restores life, and His blood atones and purifies! "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

If the redemptive work extended over the whole life and sufferings of the Saviour, there was nevertheless one hour of such moment in the drama of atonement, that Jesus declared that it was for that hour that He had come. Follow us into the solitary and gloomy garden, with its

pale olive-trees, now covered with night's darkest veil. Do you see that Man who, amid deep groanings, is calling to heaven? It is the second Adam. He is passing through the decisive trial again granted by a long-suffering and merciful love to our race, which already on the first occasion had succumbed and fallen. What a contrast between these two trials! In the first days of the world, the trial took place in paradise, beneath a radiant sky and in the midst of the sweetest felicity; in the days of Christ it took place in a desolate and gloomy solitude. What a difference between the first and the second Adam! The one looks up to heaven with a face dulled by no sorrow, with eyes which no tear has ever moistened; the other is prostrate, with His face to the ground; He bathes the dust with a bloody sweat, and His plaint is a stifled sob. The one has only the simplest commandment to obey, in order to retain all his bliss; the other beholds a cup of bitterness brought to His lips, which makes His flesh shudder. The fact is, that the first Adam is still in a world free from sin; whilst the second is in one ravaged by sin. But whilst the one in his most lovely abode ruined everything, both his race and the world, the other, in agony of soul and torture of body, saved all. "Let my will and not Thine be done," said the first Adam; and the paradise became a desert. "Not My will but Thine be done," said the second Adam; and the desert became a paradise, and in Gethsemane the gate of heaven was opened! The condemnation that rests on humanity was accepted and endured by this holy Soul. The word of disobedience was retracted, the source of disunion was destroyed, the heart of man was restored to God, peace was made, and Divine love received its answer. Look also at the difference between the two Adams, as they come forth from the solemn trial. The first fled, confounded and overwhelmed; the second rose from the dust of Gethsemane with a face radiant with such majesty that the murderous band who came to seize Him could not bear its brightness and fell to the ground.

On the one side there was pride and ruin, on the other humility and restoration : there, was perdition ; here, redemption !

This redemption was completed on the cross. There, on the infamous tree, on which up to that time the most degraded sons of humanity had been executed, on that tree of which we read, "Cursed is every one who hangeth on it," the atoning sacrifice was consummated. It would not have been enough for the Son of man to have been pierced with all the sorrows of humanity except the last. It would not have been enough for Him to have emptied the cup of all but its last dregs. It would not have been enough for Him to have endured all the consequences of man's rebellion except the last. Death is the wages of sin, and the striking sign of God's condemnation resting on a guilty world. These wages have been received for us by Him who did not deserve them, because He freely made Himself a partaker of our misery in order to save us. "I have power to lay down My life," said He, "and have power to take it again. I am not a condemned criminal, I am the holy and just One, the only begotten Son of the Father. Well, I will not withhold it, I will give it, I will offer it in sacrifice. I will accept this punishment which I have not brought on Myself ; but, by accepting it, I will transform it. From the day when I shall convert death into a free sacrifice of love, an act of the highest obedience, I shall destroy its sting, which is sin ; I shall destroy it against My breast, against My heart, to the bottom of which it will, in a certain sense, be plunged. My death on the cross will be the last act of My obedience ; it will also be the perfect re-establishment of the union between earth and heaven ; and this tree, which to My mind recalled the most absolute condemnation, will thenceforth be the glorious sign of reconciliation. The cross will for ever remind humanity that peace has been made between it and its God ; for on this bleeding altar its heart was offered, and this great sacrifice was a great act of reconciliation."

Beware of thinking that we restrict the Saviour's redemptive sufferings to His physical death! Death is the king of terrors only because it gathers together in one sheaf, if I may so say, all the consequences of sin, and the band of the sheaf is God's condemnation. Jesus Christ thus took part in our condemnation; He endured it for us, in our stead. He acknowledged that man deserved it. It was therefore the moral aspect of death which most burdened Him. In the light of Calvary He beheld the yawning abyss of our ruin, and descended into it by the exercise of His compassionate love, and also by undergoing the old sentence passed in Eden. Although He did not cease to be the well-beloved of the Father, He acknowledged the Father's right to punish and forsake us. He fathomed the awful depths of our sin. Where could He have fathomed them more thoroughly than on the cross to which evil in its worst form had nailed Him? for His immolation is the crime of crimes, revealing the frightful enmity of the human soul against its God. Yes, in that hour of darkness the sin of the world weighed on His heart, it crushed Him like a huge millstone. He knew the despair of a guilty world as well as that of hell, through that complete identification with our misery which was the consummation of His mercy. Hence that cry of desolation and of unspeakable sorrow which no theologian will ever be able to explain. The suffering of infinite love is infinite; the Son of God suffers more than a demon, because He can take up into His heart all the sufferings of a world. No martyr ever knew such agony, because none ever loved as He did; in fact, it was through the endurance of the holy and generous suffering to which He was prompted by a self-sacrificing love, truly identified with humanity, that He saved a lost world, and that, as He bowed His innocent head and breathed His last breath, He could say, "It is finished."

Ah, if you have been able to look through the darkness in which Calvary was enshrouded, you will have

l, in that last moment when the Son of man was ex-
g, all heaven shouting for joy, for lo, "he that was
s found," and the Exile from Eden is returning to
Father's house. Henceforth, whoso shall adhere by
to what Jesus Christ has accomplished for him on
cross shall return with Him to the Father's abode,
in the royal robe of His righteousness.

ch is the way in which this sovereign consolation of
it appears to us. It alone corresponds to the gravity
e misfortune, it alone is proportioned to its intensity,
ne reaches the lowest depth of our woes ; and it has
glorious characteristic, that it proceeds in a certain
from the bowels of suffering, but of suffering trans-
ed, sanctified, and raised to the height of a free and
g sacrifice. It is not a consolation which merely
up a few tears, or scatters a few flowers along our
; no, it attacks the very root of our sufferings. Our
orter is the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin
e world. In all our distresses therefore, and in all
hipwrecks, there is but one shelter, and that is the

hold the afflicted multitudes who from age to age
d with groans the holy mountain : they are the re-
ntatives of every human sorrow. As they mount they
the sad cry, "Son of David, have mercy on me."
when they have prostrated themselves before the
Victim, and are descending from Calvary, nothing
osannahs is heard, and a Divine joy beams on the
enances which had been wasted by suffering. Let
in these wailing crowds, let us ascend the holy
t : we shall not be deceived in our expectations ; for
orrows were borne on that great day, and for us also
t said, "It is finished."

The Gospel according to Mark.

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. J. H. GODWIN.

BOOK I.

Introduction, and Ministry in Galilee.

PART II. Div. IV. *Parables and Explanations.* (IV. 1-34—)

ec. I. ¹ AND He began again to teach by the lake; and a
Sower. great multitude was gathered together unto Him, so *that*

Div. IV. (Chap. iv. 1-34.) St. Matthew gives the parable of the sower *in* the same connection, and as spoken on the same day with the discourse on miracles. It is the first of a group of seven parables; but these are not *said* to have been spoken at one time; they are separated by explanations given to the disciples, and the conclusion is connected with a visit to Nazareth. St. Mark has associated three parables. St. Luke in this connection *gives* only the first, with the lessons to the disciples which are given by St. Mark. The NATURE of the parables of the New Testament does not appear *to* be peculiar. They are *similitudes*,—statements respecting natural objects, made for moral and religious instruction. Generally the objects compared are not of the same kind, and the fact declared of the one side is *simply* suggestive of the truth belonging to the other. But sometimes the objects *are* of the same class, and the tale is then example and *proof*: Luke xii. 16; *viii.* 9. The chief DESIGN of the parables of Christ appears to be instructional, *—n,* that of the people as well as of the disciples. This form of teaching *has* great advantages, on account of which it has been used by many. It *ex-* *cites* interest, and awakens reflection. Associating the invisible with the *vis-* *ible,* it makes both equally real. Connecting the familiar with the new, it *facili-* *tates* the reception of knowledge. Employing objects often seen, it *pro-* *vides* for the remembrance of lessons which might otherwise be forgotten. The parables of Christ were also spoken, to draw to Him those who desired *fur-* *ther* instruction, to whom it was given when sought for; while it was *not* given to those who did not seek it, and by whom it would be abused. *This* last consequence—continued ignorance—was not merely a result, it *was*

going into the boat He sat down in the lake ; and all the multitude was by the lake on the land. ² And He taught them many things in parables.

And He said to them in His teaching,—³ Hear ye. Lo ! the sower went out to sow. ⁴ And it happened in the sowing, some fell along the path, and the birds came

foreseen and chosen ; but it was not *the purpose* of the parables of Christ, not the sole or chief design, though it is specially noticed on account of the question of the disciples. This alone was never the end desired by Him. He declared of the lessons of His parables, that they were covered over, in order that they might become manifest—not that they might be concealed (iv. 22). St. Mark states that the parables were spoken to the *people*, as they were able to receive them (iv. 33). And St. Matthew says that the parables of Christ were like those of the psalmist, who referred to the ancient *history* of the Jews, and set forth lessons hid in *nature* from the foundation of the world (xiii. 35). In the INTERPRETATION of parables, where the explanation and the intention are declared, little difficulty remains. But often the intention is not stated, and the explanation is partial, not exhausting the significance of the parable. Then, whatever is fitly suggested, that is both *true and instructive*, may be viewed as part of the meaning of the parable. The agreement cannot be accidental ; but since, as in all comparisons, there is both agreement and difference, the statement of a parable can never alone be sufficient evidence of a corresponding truth.

Sec. I. (Mark iv. 1–20 ; Matt. xiii. 1–23 ; Luke viii. 4–15.) After a description of the circumstances, the first parable follows. By a simple analogy, the nature of the gospel is indicated, the different ways in which it was received, and the different results. Subsequently, when the disciples were alone with their Lord, they asked respecting the parable : some *why* it was spoken ; and others *what* it meant. In reply He first states that His parables were an imitation of the teaching of God, which had similar results, giving instruction to some, and leaving others in ignorance ; and then, after expressing some surprise that the disciples should need a verbal explanation, He declares the significance of every part.

¹ He went from the house, which could not receive the crowd, to the side of the lake, as on former occasions (ii. 13 ; iii. 7). The boat before mentioned was in attendance (iii. 9).

⁴ St. Luke says that this seed was trodden down, and mentions the birds *of the sky* (viii. 5). This has been here added to the common text.

and devoured it. ⁵ And other fell upon the rocky ground, where it had not much earth; and it sprang up directly, because it had no depth of earth: ⁶ but the sun rising up, it was scorched, and because it had not root, it was withered. ⁷ And other fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it; and it yielded no fruit. ⁸ And other fell into the good ground, and it yielded fruit coming up and increasing; and it bore,—one thirty, and one sixty, and one a hundred. ⁹ And He said, He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

¹⁰ But when He was in private, those about Him, with the twelve, asked Him of the parable. ¹¹ And He said to them, Unto you it has been given to know the secret of the kingdom of God: but to those who are without, all these things come in similitudes; ¹² so that seeing they

¹⁰ The question given by St. Matthew respects the *reason* of speaking thus; that given by St. Luke refers to the *meaning*.

¹¹ The secrets, or mysteries, are not incomprehensible actions, but truths, unknown at one time, and made known at another (Rom. xi. 25; xvi. 25). It is not only of His own instruction that this is said, but of the lessons respecting the Divine government, which nature and history present (Matt. xiii. 35).

¹² The seeing and not perceiving is declared to be a *result* of the method of instruction referred to; but it is not set forth as a *purpose*, still less as the *purpose*. The *consequence* of an act, and not the *intention*, is often denoted by the conjunction: Matt. i. 22; ii. 15; Mark ix. 12; xiv. 49; Luke xi. 50; xiv. 10; John v. 20; vi. 7; ix. 2; Acts viii. 19; Rom. iii. 19. Everything is according to the Divine will, in one sense; but much is contrary to the Divine will, in another sense; and the denial of the difference is destructive of religion and morality. It is never disregarded in the Bible. There God is never said to *purpose* the evil He *prohibits*, though this is *permitted* by Him and overruled for good. A *result*, seen in some cases to follow this method of instruction, is first stated; *they saw and perceived not, and heard and considered not*. With this a *purpose* is connected, the *purpose* of those who disregarded the lessons thus presented to them, not the *purpose* of the Teacher. They were not taught in parables, *lest* they should be con-

see and perceive not, and hearing hear and consider not, lest they should return, and their wrong doings be forgiven.

verted; but they would not consider, *lest* they should be converted. It was the will of God that men should return to Him; but they were unwilling to return. It is quite impossible that these words should mean, that lessons were presented to some in a form unintelligible to them, in order to prevent their receiving any profit. The *inconsideration* of men was their *sin*, and *their purpose* was to avoid repentance. The consequent *insensibility* was their *punishment*; but the Divine purpose was not to prevent repentance. Such a purpose is never in the Bible attributed to God. Of Him it is declared, that He willeth not the death of a sinner (Ezek. xviii. 23–32), that He is not willing that any should perish (2 Pet. iii. 9), that He wills that all men should be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4). If the previous words did not refer to the *voluntary* condition of men, the *lest* could not refer to their purpose. Then the term must be understood as in a similar passage, where St. Paul says, “with meekness instructing those who oppose themselves; *perhaps* God may give them repentance,” certainly not, “*lest* God should give them repentance” (2 Tim. ii. 25). But the parallel statements, which here support the usual interpretation, also show that the reference is to the sin of men, and not to their punishment,—to the purpose of men, and not to the purpose of God. The statement of Isaiah (vi. 9, 10), quoted by our Lord and given by St. Matthew and St. Paul, in the words of the Septuagint, refers to the *voluntary* indifference of the Jewish people, and *their purpose*—“*they closed their eyes, lest they should see*” (Matt. xiii. 13; Acts xxviii. 27). The words of St. John should be understood in the same way. The subject of his statements is not definitely expressed; but the same subject cannot in one sentence be referred to both by the first person and the third; and as the former is used with reference to God, the latter must be used with reference to the people—the collective noun, understood, being construed with a singular verb. “*They have made blind their eyes, and senseless their mind, lest they should see with the eyes, and perceive with the mind, and return back, and I shall heal them*” (xii. 40). According to the points which are added to the Hebrew text, the words mean, *Make the mind of this people dull*, as in the common version,—or, *the mind of this people became dull*, as in the Septuagint,—or, *this people made their mind dull*, as in the words of St. John. The same expressions are used in reference to the sin and the punishment; but they should be distinguished. Thus the statement, Matt. xiii. 13, is retrospective, but that of ver. 14 prospective. The words following in ver. 15 declare the sin of the people, whose punishment was pre-

¹³ And He said to them, Do you not know this similitude? And how will you know all the similitudes? ¹⁴ The sower sows the instruction. ¹⁵ And these are they along the path, where the instruction is sown, and when they have heard, Satan comes directly and takes away the instruction that has been sown in their minds. ¹⁶ And these likewise are they sown on the rocky ground, who when they have heard the instruction, directly with joy receive it; ¹⁷ and they have no root in themselves, but are for a season; then affliction or persecution coming on account of the instruction, they directly stumble. ¹⁸ And these are they sown among the thorns, they who hear the instruction, ¹⁹ and the cares of this world, and the seductiveness of riches, and the desires for other things, going in choke the instruction, and it becomes fruitless. ²⁰ And these

dicted (ver. 14). The word translated *understand* commonly denotes so voluntary bringing together, and is used for *considering* or *reflecting* (vi. 52; viii. 17). The meaning of the prophet's words, which the disciples learn from Christ, must be the right interpretation. It alone agrees with the parable of the prophet in the preceding chapter. The vineyard of the Lord was not laid waste, lest it should yield good fruit, but because nothing more could be done for it, and it would yield only poisonous berries (Isa. v. 4).

¹³ The questions to the disciples, which precede the explanation, imply that they might, and should, have known the meaning of this parable. Better that they should ask, than that they should remain in ignorance. Better still, if they had understood of themselves. So vii. 18; Matt. xvi. 1; John xiv. 9.

¹⁴ The explanation, as given by St. Matthew and St. Luke, is substantially the same, with slight verbal differences. Sometimes the natural object first mentioned, and then what it *represents*. Sometimes the persons represented are first mentioned metaphorically, and then fully described. The word, or declaration, or instruction, is called the word of the kingdom, Matt. xiii. 19, and the word of God, Luke viii. 11.

¹⁵ The demonstrative is repeated in the received text, but none of the uncial MSS. give it twice; and most have it in the first place.

²⁰ As three descriptions of unfruitful ground are noticed, so there are

they who were sown upon the good ground, who hear instruction, and accept it, and bear fruit,—one thirty, one sixty, and one a hundred.

And He said to them, Does the lamp come, that it
y be placed under the measure, or under the couch ?

Sec. I
Use of
Teachin

of the good ground, these differing in degree. The order is reversed as report of St. Matthew ; St. Luke, having mentioned only the seed which produced a hundred-fold, gives only one corresponding description of sons. The diversities proving independence, which appear throughout three gospels, are peculiarly manifest in this part.

A gospel is a principle of life, effective according to its reception.

Voluntary indifference leads to involuntary incapacity.

Forgetfulness makes useless Divine instruction, and is the work of the devil.

Superficial impressions are soon produced, and soon pass away.

Inferior desires often make ineffective the superior.

Truth rightly received produces good fruit, in different degrees.

Sec. II. (Mark iv. 21–25 ; Luke viii. 16–18.) After the explanation of Parable of the sower, St. Mark and St. Luke give another comparison, which is used in the sermon on the mount to enforce the duty of disciples, which here appears to be employed as an illustration of His conduct as the Light of the world. To this is added an admonition respecting reception of instruction ; and St. Mark and St. Luke give here the real principle which St. Matthew gives before the explanation of the tale,—that increase depends on use. This was said for warning and for encouragement.

This comparison occurs Matt. v. 15 ; Luke xi. 33. In the first, it is what should be the conduct of Christians ; in the second, how instruction and instruction should be employed by all men. Here the section points to another application, and guards against the supposition Christ wished to conceal truth.

and not that it may be placed upon the lamp-stand ?

²² For there is nothing covered, which may not be manifest: nor was anything covered over, but in order that it might become manifest. ²³ If any has ears to hear, let him hear.

²⁴ And He said to them, Take heed how you hear. With what measure you measure, it will be measured to you; and more will be presented to you who hear.

²⁵ For whoever possesses, there will be given to him; but whoever does not possess, even what he has will be taken from him.

Sec. III.
Following

²⁶ And He said, Thus is the kingdom of God, as if

²² A similar statement, with a similar application, is found Matt. x. 26. In both what is said is for the publicity which is declared to be the purpose of Divine instruction. The similar statement (Luke xii. 2) is directed against hypocrisy.

²⁴ The caution is not against hearing error, but against hearing the truth in a wrong way. The comparison of the measure is found in three courses, with different applications. It is used against censoriousness (Matt. vii. 2), for beneficence (Luke vi. 38), and here for the reception of instruction. The last words of this verse have been omitted in some MS from the recurrence of the same letters. They give the application of general principle.

Light is always for illumination, and is given to be diffused.

Nature and history present parables of the kingdom of God.

Instruction is received, as the capacities of the hearer are exercised.

The full and permanent possession of all good depends on its use.

Sec. III. This parable is related only here. The agency of men, in connection with the productions of nature, is said to correspond to the same

and should have cast the seed on the land, ²⁷ and should sleep and rise, by night and by day; and the seed should grow out and lengthen, how he does not know. ²⁸ For of itself the land produces fruit, first a blade, then an ear, then a full corn in the ear. ²⁹ But when the fruit offers itself, directly he sends forth the sickle, because the harvest is at hand.

And He said, To what should we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison should we compare it? ^{Sec The M} It is as a grain of mustard, which when sown on the ^{tard S}

cy, as connected with the diffusion of the gospel. The lessons of the parable are carried on in this and the following, both referring to seed sown in good ground.

There are no particulars in this parable applicable only to Christ; some not applicable to Him, and what is most prominent in the parable is comparative littleness of human power and knowledge. Men are represented as sowing and reaping (John iv. 36; 1 Cor. iii. 6). The sleeping is by night, and the rising is by day; and the seed, though not forgotten, is left to grow, undisturbed by the inspection of men.

Man's knowledge and power, in matter and in mind, are small, yet requisite.

Human powers are made to do much for him, but secretly and slowly.

He has to wait in patience, and then to take possession.

Sec. IV. (Mark iv. 30-34; Matt. xiii. 31-35.) This parable is third in series of St. Matthew. By St. Luke it is given in another connection, and spoken at another time (xiii. 18). Probably it was repeated on many occasions. By this analogy, the small commencement and great increase of the kingdom of God is shown, and the manner of its progress is again set forth. There is the growth of life,—advancement by attraction and emulation. With this St. Matthew associates the similar parable of the leaven. He then adds, with a reference to one of the psalms, a general comment similar to that with which St. Mark concludes.

land, is the least of all the seeds which are on the land
³² and when sown, it grows up and becomes the greatest
 of all the plants, and makes large branches, so that under
 its shadow the birds of the sky are able to roost.

³³ And with many such similitudes He gave instruction
 to them, as they were able to hear: ³⁴ but without a
 similitude He did not speak to them. Separately how-
 ever to His disciples He explained all.

Div. V. *Miracles. Return to Capernaum.* (IV. 35—V. 20.)

Sec. I. ³⁵ And He said to them on the same day, when evening
 coming of the Storm. came, Let us go over to the other side. ³⁶ And leaving

³² The progress of religion in the mind of each person, and the extension
 of Christianity in the world, are according to this analogy.

³³ This statement makes it clear and certain, that the parables were not
 spoken to the people for the purpose of concealment, but for their instruc-
 tion: to draw them to seek and find the meaning, which would be given
 where it would be received to profit.

³⁴ The statement that He did not speak to the people without a parable,
 does not mean, that to them He spoke nothing but parables.

The greatest and best things rise out of the smallest.

Religion advances, as all life does, secretly and by as-
 similation.

All instruction should be according to the capacity of the
 learner.

Div. V. (Chap. iv. 35—v. 20.) The preceding division contains an ac-
 count only of the words of Christ; the three sections of this division relate
 a series of the most remarkable manifestations of His power. They are
 given by St. Luke in the same manner, as directly succeeding one another.
 By St. Matthew the first two miracles are connected, and the last two; but
 between them he relates a previous miracle, which preceded his call, and
 completes his second group: and also the conversations in his house, which

the multitude, they took Him away, as He was in the boat: but other small skiffs also were with Him. ³⁷ And a great storm of wind came, and the waves were dashing into the boat, so that it was now filling. ³⁸ And He was at the stern, on the cushion, sleeping. And they awoke

preceded the application of the ruler. His arrangement here is evidently not chronological, while that given both by St. Mark and St. Luke is so professedly and consistently. The account of the second journey begins with the third division, chap. iii. 7, and concludes with this return to Capernaum.

SEC. I. (Mark iv. 35-41; Matt. viii. 23-27; Luke viii. 22, 23.) From some place on the western side of the lake, probably Capernaum, He passed over to the eastern side. It was the evening, after He had disputed with the Pharisees in the house, and discoursed with the people in parables. Wearied with the labour of the day, He fell asleep as the boat was going across. Before they reached the opposite shore, which was but a few miles off, a violent storm came down, and produced apparent peril. The disciples awoke their Lord, and He subdued the storm, gently reproving their want of faith. Both the disciples in the boat, and those who accompanied them in other boats, were astonished at this new manifestation of Divine power. In the narrative of St. Luke, this miracle follows the parable of the sower. By St. Matthew it is given before, being the first of his second group of miracles. The discussion respecting miracles, and the parables, are by him reserved for a later part; and, with other similar discourses, they present the effects of the ministry of Christ. The *real* agreement in the three narratives, and the *verbal* differences, are sure signs of independence and of truth:

³⁵ St. Matthew gives a conversation occasioned by this departure.

³⁶ Leaving behind, and taking away, are opposed and expressed by the words here employed, in Matt. xxiv. 40. They took Him away, wearied, and without preparation for a night voyage.

³⁸ Most boats would have at least one cushion, on which passengers might sit or lie down. There is no reason for supposing that the sleep of Jesus was in nature different from common human sleep, for He shared the weakness and wants of men. Rather may we suppose that the faith which was expressed in the prospect of death would precede in thought, if not in speech, the sleep of every night, *Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit*. Because of this faith, He could not be afraid (Luke xxiii. 46; Heb. ii. 13; xii. 2).

Him, and said to Him, Teacher, is it nothing to Thee that we perish? ³⁹ And arising He rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, Silence; be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰ And He said to them, Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have not faith? And they feared with much awe, ⁴¹ and said one to another, Who then is this, that the wind also and the sea are obedient unto Him?

c. II. ¹ AND they went unto the other side of the lake, unto the country of the Gadarenes. ² And when He went

³⁹ The words given by St. Matthew are, "Lord, save us; we are perishing;" by St. Luke, "Master, Master, we are perishing." There were probably different speakers. The words spoken to the sea are given only by St. Mark. The reproof of the disciples is given by St. Matthew, before the stilling of the storm. It may have been repeated. If they had considered the Divine knowledge and power which they had seen in their Lord, they would have understood that no storm could frustrate His plans. And if they had considered the work to which they had been recently appointed, but which they had not yet begun, they would have been sure that their course could not thus be brought prematurely to a close.

The way of the highest and best is sometimes in darkness and storm.

For the servants of God there is seeming peril, and real security.

Christ's faith was never shaken, and all things were subject to Him.

SEC. II. (Mark v. 1-20; Matt. viii. 28-ix. 1; Luke viii. 26-39.) On arriving at the opposite shore, they were met by a demoniac. The violence and wretchedness of the afflicted man are first described; then his conversation with Jesus and his cure are related, with the subsequent action of the demons; and finally the conduct of the people who desired His departure, and of the restored man who wished to go with Him. This narrative is given by St. Luke in the same connection, and with the same particulars;

out from the boat, directly there came forth to Him from the tombs a man with an evil spirit, ³ who had his dwelling in the tombs. And not even with chains was any one able to bind him; ⁴ for that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been severed by him, and the fetters broken. ⁵ And no one had power to control him; and always, night and day, he was on the hills, and in the tombs crying out and striking himself with stones.

⁶ But seeing Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell down before Him. ⁷ And crying with a loud voice he said, What hast Thou to do with me, Jesus, Son of God, the Highest? I adjure Thee by God not to torment me.

the differences being only verbal. St. Matthew also gives it after the storm, as the second in his second group of miracles. His narrative omits many particulars, but states that two demoniacs were cured. There was another case, similar, subsequent, and subordinate, which might naturally be associated with the one mentioned by St. Mark and by St. Luke. They speak only of the first, whose subsequent conduct is related by them.

¹ The district on the south-east of the lake had more than one name. The diversity of readings, in all the gospels, proves that there must have been some difference in the originals. The preponderance of evidence is in favour of *Gergesenes* in St. Matthew, of *Gadarenes* in St. Mark and St. Luke. The *Girgashites* are mentioned in the Old Testament; and a town *Gergesa* is mentioned by Origen. *Gadara* was one of the chief cities of *Decapolis*, about six miles from the lake, inhabited by Gentiles. The boat may have been driven southward by the storm.

² The tombs were caves in the side of the hill, and from one of them the man came forth. There was the morning light, for persons could be seen at a distance.

⁴ St. Matthew merely says that the two demoniacs were very violent. St. Luke's description has similar details, with the addition that he was without clothing.

⁶ The running for relief was the action of the man himself; but the cry of terror was the utterance of the evil spirit.

⁷ Similar, but not exactly the same, were the acknowledgment and entreaty before recorded (i. 24).

⁸ For He said to him, Go out, thou evil spirit, from ~~the~~ man. ⁹ And He asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, Legion is my name, for we ~~are~~ many. ¹⁰ And he besought Him much, that He would ~~not~~ send them away out of the country. ¹¹ Now there ~~was~~ there on the hill a large herd of swine feeding; ¹² ~~and~~ all the demons besought Him saying, Send us to ~~the~~ swine, that we may enter into them. And Jesus ~~directly~~ gave them leave. ¹³ And the evil spirits going away,

⁸ The expulsion of the demons was not instantaneous, but according to certain conditions. The question asked, like the inquiry made of the father of a demoniac, seems designed to express compassion and to awaken faith (ix. 21). Some hope of deliverance appeared in his coming to Jesus. The expression of the countenance, and the tones of the voice, may give the highest significance to words which, alone, would have little meaning.

⁹ The utterances are still those of the evil spirit, using the disordered faculties of the man, and suggesting to him that he was subject to a host of demons. The name may have been given to him by the people, on account of his strength and violence (ver. 15).

¹⁰ The hill and the tombs were at some distance from the place, but within view, and in the same neighbourhood (Matt. ix. 30; Luke v. 6). St. Matthew previously gives a question respecting their being tormented before their time; St. Luke, the entreaty that they might not be sent into the abyss (Rev. ix. 1). Most of the particulars belonging only to one case are omitted in the narrative of St. Matthew, which embraces two.

¹² The demons asked to be sent into the swine, and Jesus permitted them to go there; but He did not send them there. St. Mark and St. Luke merely say, He permitted them; and St. Matthew gives the reply to the request,—Go away. They were permitted by God to afflict the man, but they were not sent by Him. Jesus simply left them to their own choice; what followed was their doing, not His.

¹³ The destruction of the swine is declared by the three evangelists; it is an incident very unlikely to be invented; and it is not without analogy. The destructive propensities of animals are commonly limited to their wants, and are then sufficiently accounted for by natural instinct. Even some manifest at times a fury, which seems to have no object but destruction. The epidemical disorders to which animals, as well as men, are subject, are only partially explained by any material causes. If evil spirits

entered into the swine ; and the herd rushed down the **cliff** into the lake ; there were about two thousand, and **they** were choked in the lake.

¹⁴ But they who were herding the swine fled, and told it **in** the town and in the fields. And they went out to **see** what had happened. ¹⁵ And they came to Jesus, and **beheld** the demoniac seated and clothed and sane,—the **man** who had the legion ; and they were afraid. ¹⁶ And the spectators related to them, how it happened to the demoniac, and respecting the swine. ¹⁷ And they began to entreat Him to go away from their borders. ¹⁸ And when He got into the boat, the man who had been subject to demons entreated Him, that he might be with Him. ¹⁹ But Jesus did not allow him, but said to him, Go away to thy home, unto thy friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for thee, and that He pitied thee. ²⁰ And he went away, and began to publish in Decapolis, how much Jesus did for him ; and all were astonished.

have any power over men, they may have a similar power over brutes ; their direct action being in every case on the body.

¹⁴ The place to which the herdsmen went was Gergesa, or some other small town in the neighbourhood.

¹⁷ Their request was prompted by fear. They dreaded the Divine power, and regarded not the goodness shown with it. The destruction of the swine is not related as a punishment, and their use was not forbidden to Gentiles. But as an indirect consequence of the presence of Jesus, it increased the fear of the people, and made them desire His departure.

¹⁹ He was to make known the Saviour in a district not yet visited by Him, for the sake of the lost sheep of the house of Israel dwelling there, and for the sake of Gentiles who, without miracles, would receive His salvation. Publicity was forbidden when it would hinder the ends of the gospel, but enjoined when it would promote them.

Evil spirits have some power over the bodies of men and brutes.

They seek to distress, to degrade, and to destroy.

They know the dignity of Christ, and submit to
power.

Christ is served by declaring to men the goodness
God.

His

of

Outlines.

Divine Surroundings.

"They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever," etc.—Ps. cxxv. 1, 2.

THE object of faith in man is faithfulness in God. Divine trustworthiness is the basis and ground of human trust. Faith is no more frequently enjoined in Scripture than faithfulness is illustrated. The two mutually suppose and affect each other. God's faithfulness is present, that man may have faith. Man is enjoined to trust, because God is trustworthy. The text is an illustration.

Faith is not directly enjoined, but the duty of it is implied in the affirmation of the Divine faithfulness.

One preliminary observation: "They that trust in the LORD" are the "people" of God; for faith is trust, and this is the prime distinction of the godly. The text identifies them.

God is presented to faith in His promise, in His provision of Christ. Believing His testimony, we rest on Christ.

Faith is the most influential of all emotions or principles, for it makes the truster subject to the trusted, in conviction, affection, obedience. The real obstacle to the peace, assurance, stability of any one is want of faith in God.

The lesson of the text is twofold:—

I. The *Security of the people of God*, expressed thus: "The LORD is round about them, as the mountains are round Jerusalem."

he mountains were—so is, the LORD—round about.
is not simply near, within call, but encompassing:
is between them and all evil.

he *almightiness* of God. “The LORD on high is
htier than the noise of many waters.”

he *unerring wisdom*. “Thou shalt guide me with thy
isel.”

he *unchanging love*—“I have loved thee with an
lasting love.”

his Divine surrounding affects the *spiritual interests* of
people. These are exposed to continual peril, from
in and without, from Satan, the world, the flesh; but
ey shall never perish; my Father who gave them
s greater than all; none shall be able to pluck them
of my Father’s hand.”

he *temporal necessities* of His people. “Consider the
,”

l *providential experiences*. Their industrial relations;
perils of their affections. “He shall not be afraid of
tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD!”

heir *sorrows*. “When thou passest through the
rs I will be with thee.”

would be a violation of all truth, and it would be
sed to my purpose in this exposition, if it were to be
ned in illustration of the security of the people of
, that they are *never* in danger, *never* in want, *never* in
ow. But in proportion as they trust in God these
cies cannot affect them for evil, for God is nearer
a than they; and so

l. *Their stability*. Mount Zion cannot be removed,
abideth *for ever*; even so, they *that trust*. Having
old of God, they cannot be permanently injured in
highest and eternal relations. Moved they may be,
never removed; “perplexed, but not in despair;
ecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not de-
red.” “The LORD is round about them *even for ever*.”

reenock.

J. M. JARVIE.

Reconciliation.

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself," etc.
2 Cor. v. 19, 20.

SALVATION of the Bible alone meets the universal want mankind. It has a way to reconcile man to God—"wit, that God," etc.

I. RECONCILIATION, IN ITS AUTHOR.

"*God in Christ.*" Reconciliation is the great achievement of the great God. To bring about a great and important work, three things are necessary. *Wisdom to plan, power to execute, and motive to carry it out.* These three things are seen in man's redemption.

(1) *God's wisdom*, "His manifold wisdom." (2) *God's power*, His moral power. (3) *God's motive*, His love to His grace. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again," etc.

II. RECONCILIATION, IN ITS MEDIUM. "God was in Christ."

We see God in the atom, in the hill, in the mountains and in the planet. We see God in the dewdrop, in the brook, in the river, and in the great ocean. We see God in the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, and in the moral kingdom. Yet in Christ alone we meet God, and be reconciled to Him, "God in Christ." This medium (1) *Is available to all*, "God with us." (2) *Is sufficient to all*, "He that cometh shall in no wise be cast out."

III. RECONCILIATION, IN ITS AMBASSADORS.

"Hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Man is to proclaim the glad tidings of the gospel. It is to inform the world that reconciliation has been brought about.

(1) *The honour conferred upon man.* God has ordained him to preach the gospel. "Go ye to all the world."

(2) *The responsibility of the true minister.* What responsibility rests on the servant of the Most High!

IV. RECONCILIATION, IN ITS GLORY.

“*Reconciling the world unto himself,*” etc. The way of reconciliation is the most glorious work. Its glory

appears:—

(1) In *its greatness*. “*Reconciling the world unto himself,*” not for a nation, for the wide world.

(2) In *its generosity*. “*Reconciling the world,*” *His enemies*.

(3) In *its condition*. “*Not imputing their trespasses unto them.*”

Llandilo.

J. O. GRIFFITHS.

Christianity a Rule of Life.

“*And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.*”—GAL. vi. 16.

I. THAT CHRISTIANITY IS A RULE OF LIFE. “*And as many as walk according to this rule.*”

(1) *Christianity is a Divine rule*. Christianity is of God.

(2) *Christianity is a perfect rule*. “*The law of the Lord is perfect.*”

(3) *Christianity is an unchangeable rule*. “*The word of the Lord standeth for ever.*”

(4) *Christianity is a precious rule*. “*The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.*”

(5) *Christianity is an influential rule*. “*Converting the soul.*”

II. THAT CONFORMITY TO CHRISTIANITY AS A RULE OF LIFE IMPARTS GREAT BLESSINGS.

(1) *Harmony of soul*. “*Peace be on them.*”

(2) *The favour of God*. “*And mercy.*”

(3) *Relation to the children of God*. “*And upon the Israel of God.*”

Llandilo.

J. O. GRIFFITHS.

Reviews.

BIBLE CLASS STUDIES on some of the words of the Lord Jesus, by JESSIE COOMBS, author of "Thoughts for the Inner Life." *Jackson, Walford & Hodder.* This volume is the result of the author's study of the Scriptures for her Bible class. These studies have been conscientious and thorough. Women often possess the gift of directly seeing truth where man has to work it out by a process of reasoning. Miss Coombs, though possessing in a high degree the intuitive perception common to her sex, has not exclusively relied upon it. She has studied well the volumes of Stier and other critics on the passages she has selected for her "Studies," and given the results in a clear and interesting style. Miss Coombs deserves to rank high among "those women who labour with us in the gospel."

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST. FAITHFULNESS. By the Rev. EDWIN JOHNSON, B.A. These two sermons are "published by request." It does credit to the congregation who requested the publication of sermons so practical. The subjects are powerfully and impressively handled, and the style fresh and vigorous. Want of space we regret prevents us giving extracts from them.

THE ENGLISH BIBLE: HOW TO READ AND STUDY IT.—SYMBOLIC AND FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE OF THE BIBLE.—THE BEAUTIES AND PECULIARITIES OF THE BIBLE. BY WM. CARPENTER. *Heywood & Co.* These three little books form part of a very useful series of biblical helps, by an author to whom biblical literature owes much. His pen was once much in demand; but it seems in his old age he has been held of less account by the public, or rather by the publishers; and very sad is his allusion to this in the preface. "He now finds that new kings, 'who knew not Joseph,' have arisen. Formerly publishers asked for his services; now he has asked for theirs without obtaining them; and, but for Mr. Baker Lelean, this series of books would have slipped—as the author himself soon will—out of sight." The above works are well written, and full of instructive matter.

AREOPAGITICA. *Alexander Murray.* This is a reprint of John Milton's famous speech, or argument, for the liberty of unlicensed printing. The chief peculiarities of this edition are its antique dress and its unprecedented cheapness.

St. Paul's Episode on Love.

PART IV.

The Characteristics of Love.

“ Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly,” etc.—1 Cor. xiii. 4-7.

AFTER stating how essential love was, to give virtue and power to other, even the most important gifts, the apostle passes on to describe its most essential qualities. This he does by enumerating fifteen of its characteristics.

Love suffereth long. With this we may class the eighth characteristic, very similar, *Is not easily provoked.* Love bears long with slights and neglects, with provocation and injury, without flying into passion or showing resentment. It is patient, not soon disheartened, not soon exhausted. This feature we see pre-eminently in a mother's love, which is but a faint emblem (though the nearest and the truest this world can give) of the pure and heavenly love here described. See her with her infant child. How unweariedly she tends it! How patiently she bears with its fretfulness and wilfulness! Or is it in sickness? She never tires, bending over its little crib; or, with pillow on her knee, softly and soothingly she sings to it from morning to night, and night to morning. Or is the child grown into youth? Others have thrown him off as wayward, perhaps as wicked; but not so his mother. He has exhausted his teacher's patience; his

employer is forced to dismiss him; friends and neighbours have long despaired of him: but not so the mother. "How oft shall my son sin against me, and I forgive him, till seven times?" Ah, to her the answer does not seem strange, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven."

In all departments and all relations of life—as a husband or wife, a parent or child, a teacher or scholar, a master or servant, a friend or neighbour, let our love be that which *suffers long*. Let us ask ourselves, Is this the nature of our love? Do I suffer long with my friend's repeated slights and apparent coldness? Do I bear patiently with his little whims and petty ways? Do I, a husband, suffer long with the tardiness or the forgetfulness or the other little faults of the wife? or I, a wife, with the quickness or the sullenness, or other lighter or weightier failings of the husband? Do I, a servant, "suffer long" with the master's or mistress's irritable temper? or do I suffer long with the slowness and the listlessness, with the dullness and the carelessness of those under my superintendence and care, when training them in business or for the household, or when teaching them in the Sunday or in the week-day school? Nothing contributes so much to peace and harmony as this long suffering. Nothing robs love of its fair fruits as the absence of this habit of suffering long. How often are the disagreements, the jarrings, the discontents and contentions in society be traced to the absence of this quality of love, that it does *not suffer long*! A hasty word sternly resented, when it should be playfully turned away; an irritable expression is construed into an injury, when it should be regarded only as an outburst of weakness.

Love is kind. This may be regarded as closely connected with the suffering long. Love is kind in its long-suffering. It not merely refrains from giving way to impatience or resentment, but is kind in bearing with the wrong. Whilst suffering long, it does not feel or seem to feel as if suffering "under an infliction." One may suffer long without being kind. To bear patiently with wrong may be considered necessary for the retaining of one's self-respect. It may be thought to be beneath one's notice to show irritation, or to give way to anger under the provocation of an insignificant foe. With superiors too, one may deem it prudent to suffer long for the sake of promotion. Even for the cruelest purposes one may suffer long, that revenge may be executed at a more convenient season. But the long-suffering of love is always kind, kind in intention and manner. It bears long, that it may give space for repentance, and that by kindness it may win to what is right and noble.

It is true also, absolutely, that love is kind. What passes in the world under the name of love is often cruel, is often nothing better than the basest selfishness. But Christian love always seeks the good of those it loves. It is kind, even when administering correction; yea, the highest kindness of love is shown then. Often is it a much harder duty to check disobedience and wrong by punishment than to suffer long with it, and let it pass by unnoticed. The former is the kinder of the two.

Love envieth not. This is the first of the negative characteristics of love. It is not vexed by the good of others, by their pre-eminence in gifts, in honours, or wealth. Envy indeed is the opposite of love, or at least is the child of ill-will, which is the contrary of love.

Envy and love are alike in one respect, in their power of fascination. "There be none of the affections," says Lord Bacon, "which have been noted to fascinate or bewitch, but love and envy. They both have vehement wishes; they frame themselves readily into imaginations and suggestions, and they come easily into the eye, especially upon the presence of the objects which are the points that conduce to fascination." In spirit and in all else they are contraries: wherever love rules envy hides its face.

No man can have a greater curse than this canker of envy rankling within him. It is a disease engendered by the breath of the Evil One himself and indigenous to the realms over which he presides. And the only effectual cure for it is that choicest balm of heaven, the love of God shed abroad in the heart.

Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly. These three may be grouped together, as they all have reference to the outward manner, and are to be viewed in connection with the disorders of the Corinthian Church.

Some of the Corinthians had been employing their gifts for the purpose of vain-glory; they had been "puffed up" with the possession of showy gifts. They used those gifts, not so much for the glory of God and the profit of others, as for the purposes of display and self-exaltation. The result was in many cases behaviour that was disorderly and unseemly. These were not the natural fruits of love. "*Love vaunteth not itself;*" it is unassuming, modest, retiring. Neither is it puffed up. He who is filled with love is too much taken up with how to cheer and benefit others, to be "puffed up" by reason

any little pre-eminence in position or talents. It is the loveless and unlovable Pharisee that is "puffed up." The loving Christian feels himself unworthy even to lift his eyes to heaven. He is like the loving centurion, who thought more of the recovery of his servant than of his personal dignity: "I am unworthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof."

It is common enough to see loving and lovable men, with little peculiarities, with conceited airs and pompous manners. These however are not the products of love, nor is their presence evidence of the absence of love. They are

excrecences which, without the modifying and balancing influence of love, would be prominent deformations. Beneath the inflated manner there is often the genuine, warm, and loving heart. When we come to know the heart we forget the little foibles and fussiness and peculiarities of manner, perhaps come even to like them for our admiration of him to whom they belong.

The above remark to some extent applies also to the next characteristic—"Doth not behave itself unseemly." There are many who are full of love, who in their zeal to give expression to it behave somewhat unseemly. They do not and do what is far from being orderly and seemly; but no one would judge that they were deficient in love. They have a zeal, but not according to knowledge. They are deficient in taste, but not in devotion. All these blemishes in manner are however to be avoided: love in perfection is free from them all.

"Seeketh not her own." It is of the very nature of love, to go out beyond itself and seek others' good. There are philosophers who resolved every virtue into selfishness. Self-love—the seeking in some hidden or open

way its own—was to explain every action of the human mind and heart. Such had never studied the NEW COMMANDMENT. They never had heard of, or seen in operation, Christian love. Much of our love, it is too true, if examined, would be chargeable with seeking its own. It may disdain accepting of any return of a material kind for the sacrifices it makes; but perhaps it seeks the return at least of gratitude and love. Many find, in the absence of this return, an excuse for the ebbing of love. The Christian, however, has a love that seeketh not even this: it seeketh nothing for itself; it loves amid coldness and ingratitude, and continues to love until the end.

Thinketh no evil. True love suspects no evil of others. It is not inclined to believe an evil report; it is not suspicious. It construes charitably what to others might be considered evil.

“Thinking no evil” implies *speaking no evil*. From thinking evil it is a short and easy step to speaking evil. With some, to think is to speak; what is in their minds is immediately on their lips. Here is the cure for the besetting sin of speaking evil of others. Nothing will so effectually stay the evil as love. We may be always on our guard against it; but if our thoughts of others be evil, in spite of all our care these thoughts at times will manifest themselves in words. Fill the heart with love, and evil thinking and evil speaking will alike be excluded.

Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Love does not take pleasure in the sight of iniquity in any form, or rejoice on hearing of the triumph of injustice. This the apostle in his epistle to the Romans mentions as one of the characteristics of the wicked: “not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

Though most people would be ashamed to have it known that they ever rejoice in iniquity, yet I am persuaded that it is true of many that they rejoice in secret, and unconsciously, in iniquity. The same philosophy which would resolve all virtue into self-love asserts also that there is always a secret pleasure in hearing of others' successes or falls; that there is, along with the painful humiliating feeling, also a self-complacent feeling that is not so with us, "that we are not as others, even as the heathen." As an exposition of man's *fallen* nature, it may be true; but Christian love, entering the human world, changes there which the mere philosopher cannot understand—it transforms it. Instead of self being supreme, God and God's spirit, the spirit of love, comes into universal sway. The heart that is filled with love does not rejoice or feel aught but pain at the sight or the thought of iniquity or injustice. But *he rejoiceth in the truth*; he rejoiceth in the triumph of justice, in the triumph of truth, especially of *the* truth, in whatever form it comes, by whatever instrumentality it is disseminated. The language of the loving and beloved disciple becomes the language of every loving heart,—“I rejoiced when the brethren came and testified of the things that are in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth.”

Covers all things. Or, as it may be rendered, covers, covers all things; love draws a veil over the failings of men. This would be equivalent to the apostle Peter's statement, charity will “cover” a multitude of sins.

Believeth all things. That is, of course, all things within the sphere of belief. To believe everything it hears, be it

true or false, is characteristic of *superstition*, but not of love; "we have not followed cunningly devised fables." But it is ever disposed to believe well of every one, to entertain a good opinion of others when there is **no** evidence to the contrary. A common maxim of **the** world is, "Trust no one," take every one for an enemy till you prove him to be a friend. The maxim of love, however, is much better, "Trust every one," "Believe **all** things." Better to suffer disappointment or loss **by** extending to a brother an over-generous confidence, **than** to do him injustice by withholding it. Nothing is **more** hurtful to one's truthfulness of character than **having** one's word doubted; nothing has such an effect **in** weakening one's integrity as being always suspected **of** dishonesty. To bring up children as truthful, we **must** treat them as such. The best way of making them **grow** up worthy of confidence is to repose confidence in them: in this way, what is noble and generous in them is **called** forth, while by the reverse what is selfish and mean **is** suggested and developed. Love ever remembers that **it** is not less so in our transactions and intercourse with **our** fellow-men, and especially with God's spiritual children.

Hopeth all things. Believing all that is good of others, easy and natural is it to hope what is good of them. **It** is far from being the mark of a lovely character to **be** anticipating always the worst, to be expecting failure **to** attend every enterprise, to be predicting misfortune **to** every journey. The future as well as the present **looks** always bright to love. It hopes for the development of what is pure and lovely in every character, and for **pros-**perity and success to every setting out in life. **On** its lips is encouragement rather than forebodings of ill.

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deepest in degradation and vice. It always re-
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, *Kent.*

D. L.

Misread Passages of Scripture.

BY THE REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, D.A.

V.

The Lost Birthright.

“Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”—HEB. xii. 16, 17.

THESE words have always seemed to be among the very saddest in the book of God. No place of repentance, though sought carefully with tears! It is a very terrible picture, and seems to describe the experience of what must have been a very wretched and blighted life. It is possible that if we study the matter closely some of the tones of sadness may be lightened; but still Esau and his sad history will remain one of the dark perplexities of Scripture, just as the acts and the fate of men like Esau are among the most inscrutable mysteries of life. There are men like Esau cropping up everywhere; men who seem born to lose their birthright, to be befooled by the keen and subtle Jacobs, to be seeking ever places of repentance, and to find Fate inexorable to their tears. Men *born* under the dark doom of the rejected we are tempted to say,—so inevitable their destiny appears from the first. In this case, “*the elder shall serve the younger*” was written of the twin brethren in the womb, and Jacob was the successful supplanter from his birth. There are many sad mysteries in life, and the history of such natures and their destiny are among the saddest. We cannot hope to fathom it on earth; but blessed be God for the assurance which we are not only permitted but bound to cherish, that all which is inscrutable here and dark with shadows will unfold a divine order and beauty in the long bright day of eternity.

Esau and Jacob, both in their personal character and their relations with each other, are representative men, who foreshow in brief the essential character of large ages and long periods of human development. They are before us, as we read the record of their personal story, the great twin brethren, the Gentile and the Jewish, perhaps even more widely the Christian and the Pagan, sections of mankind. The earlier records of the book of God are full of such typical characters and incidents. In truth, in the earliest time life was typical; men lived in large and free intercourse with Nature and with their fellow-men. The conventional swathing-bands which modern society has bound itself were unknown. Men lived boldly from within, and what they said and did had broad human significance, and forecast usually what men would say and do under the same conditions to the end of time. Hence, we imagine, the vividness of the book of Genesis in its painting of character and life. Nowhere have we anything like so large and graphic portraiture as here. The reason is surely that in those ages life was richly doctrinal, and the God who caused all holy Scripture to be written for our learning saw that the history of such lives as those of Abraham, Isaac, Esau, Jacob, and Joseph, would be the most precious legacy which could be handed down from the age of the patriarchs to all time. The contrast of these two men is peculiarly rich and instructive. Esau is the lusty, genial, jovial pagan; impulsive, impetuous, frank, and generous, but sensual and self-willed. A man keenly alive to the claims and expectations of the moment; slow to believe in unseen realities and the harvest which could only be reaped beyond many years of patience and pain. Jacob, on the other hand, led from the first a meditative and interior life. That may be meant by the description, "a plain man, dwelling in tents," is not very apparent. It certainly does not simply describe a fact in his history, but rather a picture of his character. He loved the home life, while

the burly Esau was abroad in the field; he loved to be at home, meditating on many things, and amongst the highest—a plain man, sound, pure, pious, as some commentators have it. The meaning of the word is certainly moral; “*integer vitæ*” may perhaps express it. The pilgrim Abraham was reproduced in Jacob in some of the main features of his character. He could understand, at any rate, what Esau apparently could never understand—the sacredness of a Divine vocation, the value of a birthright which carried with it a Divine benediction, and which was freighted with the Divine promise to the world. The grand distinction between the two men from the first was, that Jacob had faith, while Esau had none. Jacob had the heart of a pilgrim, Esau the heart of a “prince of this world.” Jacob saw something behind the veil, which filled his soul with awe and made his life a constant aspiration; Esau saw that on this side the veil which filled him with the only pleasure which he cared to grasp at, and which taught him to look upon his brother’s pilgrim lot and halting step as the sign of a broken and wasted life. Esau had his grand success—the principedom which he founded. You may read the list of the “dukes of Edom, who sprang from him,” in the chapters which record his history. The sad and weary Jacob, standing before Pharaoh when his race was waning, witnessed this confession, “*Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.*” His success lay beyond generations and ages, beyond the rising of the “Star that should come out of” his house, beyond the resurrection day. Jacob’s life won no success but such as he shares with humanity in time and in eternity. His success is our success; in his blessing we are blessed. He stands forth in the early twilight of history as the typical child of the kingdom, the Prince of God, having power with two worlds. He is the representative of the elect men and races. This election is a broad, plain

principle of God's government. In all ages God is wont to call men, races, nations, out of the commonwealth of humanity, and to bring them near unto Himself. Their election is to service—high service, hard battle, stern endurance. First in honour, they must be first in perils, pains, temptations, and toils. Privilege is a word of abundant meaning in the book of God's dispensations; but it means privilege to be first—to lead the van, to clear the way, to open new paths for progress through the jungle of ignorance and night. Privilege to belong to a privileged class, to special advantage and certain success; privilege to run the race of life, light and trim against weighted competitors, is part of the devil's gospel, not of God's. Of this royal class, who are God's elect ministers to mankind in all their generations, Jacob is a typical representative. We learn from his character and history what God means by callings, birthrights, and blessings, and how much those whom He places in the front rank have to toil and suffer for the world. There is something in Jacob's character and in the development of his life which is significant for all time, which forecasts the course of Jewish and Christian ages, and prophesies in broad outline the method of God's universal culture of our race.

At the same time the patriarch of Israel presents to us a wonderfully complete image of the race which sprang from him. We speak of Jacob rather than Abraham, as the founder of the people to which he gave his name; Abraham, the father of the faithful, is the founder of a yet richer and mightier line. But Jacob is the typical Jew. His life, like the life of his people, is simply incomprehensible to those who cannot realize a Divine vocation, who cannot cling to a Divine promise, who cannot struggle and suffer in faith for the sake of far-off divine results, whereby humanity at large would be blessed. Jacob's life was made what it was by the commerce which he held with the unseen God of his fathers. They have but a dim eye for the meanings of history who

cannot see that, under all this man's questionable deeds and chequered experience, this faith in God was the deepest and strongest element in his nature. It ruled the critical moments of his life, it sustained him through all the stormiest scenes of his pilgrimage, and it shone out clearest and strongest in death. Scarcely had he gone forth an exile from the house of his fathers, when this fruitful commerce with God and the spiritual world was established. The beautiful narrative in Genesis casts a flood of light on his life. "*And Jacob went on from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.*" (Gen. xxviii. 10-17.)

Precisely the same influence was formative of character and destinies of his race. This high and great quality, this openness to the influence of the "power of the world to come," which is surely the grandest qualities, renders the highest Divine culture possible with eternally blessed and glorious results. But i

marred and debased both in Jacob and in his people by the alloy of selfish, base, and carnal elements, of the earth earthy, which it was the great aim of all the Divine discipline under which he and his people suffered so sharply, to purge away and to destroy. And herein he represents a wider family than Israel. This Divine tincture, in a measure, is in all of us, mixed with the baser earthy matter. God's chosen ones, the subjects of His highest culture in all ages, have mostly the earthy element in full force, struggling with the Divine. No model men were the chosen people of ancient times, nor the saints of apostolic days. The one question is, Hast thou faith? "*Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief,*" is substantially the confession of Jacob, of Israel, and of all who in any age form part of the Church of the living God. When Jacob, when the Jews, suffered themselves to forget the Divinity which was with them, which was in them, their superior power revealed itself as simply masterly craft. Jacob, viewed in one light, is just the most accomplished and successful schemer of his times; in another light, he is the grandest spiritual prince. His people repeat the anomaly. The race of the grandest spiritual power, of the most intense religious belief, have earned the character of the most accomplished hucksters and tricksters of the world. The power capable of the one, under the true inspiration, without it sank easily to the level of the other. There is a modern instance remarkably in point. In many respects the Scotch have succeeded to the character and position which the Jews occupied in ancient society. In both peoples there is the same grand spiritual power, the same prophetic spirit—Edward Irving was more after the fashion of an old Jewish prophet than any man, except perhaps Savonarola, whom we have had among us in these modern days—the same intense religious zeal, the same heroism in fighting and suffering for their faith, mixed up with the same worldly ambition, the same cautious and canny temper, the same facility of dispersion, and the same power of

getting on and winning wealth and influence wherever God might cast their lot. Is there not a manifestation of the same law in the history of the universal Church? As with Jacob, as in Judaism, so in Christendom, the leading spiritual magnates, the prominent Churchmen of all ages, forsaking their true strength, divesting themselves of their true power as Christ's priests and kings, have sunk to the level of the most selfish schemers, and have won the reputation of the cleverest and wiliest statesmen of the world. Churchcraft in all ages has been held to be a shade more worldly, more subtle, more ruthless, than statecraft. The old proverb, "the corruption of the best is the worst" partly accounts for it; but something is due also to the principle whose workings we trace through Jacob's history, that the power which, inspired of God, is capable of godlike activity, when the world or the devil get hold of it, is capable of all manner of worldly and devilish work with fell energy and success.

But Jacob's life was purified and elevated as it passed through its tremendous discipline. The aged pilgrim having won the title of Prince of God, stood before Pharaoh clothed with a dignity and power which made the world's mightiest monarch bend eagerly under the blessing of his hand. "*The Angel which redeemed me from all evil,*" he spake of, when his eyes were growing dim in death. The history of his life is the history of that redemption, and this is its rich meaning for us. He sinned basely and shamefully, he suffered as few have suffered, and wrestled as few have strength to wrestle for the blessing which purified and redeemed his life. A sad, stricken, broken man, halting painfully on his thigh, he went on his way, but ennobled, purified, and saved. His life is a revelation of the way of God in the discipline of our spirits; how power gets educated and purified, and made meet at last for the work and the joy of eternity. So Judaism, as it struggled on and suffered, lost some of its baser elements, and came forth, developed, into a higher region of experience and power, in the life of the Christian Church.

The study of the character of these two men is full of the richest interest and instruction; but our present purpose is with the elder, and this profoundly sad passage of his history. There is much, in the matter both of the birthright and the repentance of which our text speaks, which is frequently very grievously and even disastrously misunderstood, which is supposed to present ideas of the dealings of God with man which contradict the fundamental principles of the gospel, and casts no trifling stumbling-blocks before the steps of faith. That we may understand it truly let us consider—

I. That the rejection of the elder, and the election of the younger to honour and power—to all that the election of God could bring—by no means stands by itself in the history of the Divine dispensations; and it illustrates an important principle on which we will dwell for a moment before we pass on.

We are tempted to think that, on the whole, Esau was a hardly used man, and that we have here an instance of the exercise of the Divine sovereignty which is harsh, arbitrary, and unjust. In the natural course of things, Esau would have had the birthright and all that it was worth. It is made to appear that by a purely arbitrary act Esau was robbed of it, while Jacob was endowed with it, having no sort of superior claim. Paul, in Romans ix. 10-13, is careful to insist that whatever the principle may be which is at work here, at any rate it is not merit, for the decree was pronounced long before any questions of merit could have force. The sovereignty of God is here the keystone of his argument; it is worth our while to discern, as far as we may, the reason on which this act of sovereignty rests. Of course the sympathy which we extend to Esau is based upon some idea of the rights of the elder born which seems to be instinctive in the human heart. This opens a wide question into which we have no need in this place to enter. The principle is recognised plainly enough in the word of God. In Deuteronomy xxi. 15-17, there is explicit legislation on

the subject. "If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both of the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be her's that was hated: then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn: but he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his." Joseph was evidently grieved when Jacob blessed the younger with the blessing of the firstborn, as though some sacred order had been violated; and the very word "firstborn" is employed as a term of dignity and pre-eminence both in the Old and the New Testament scriptures. I believe it to be for the good of society that this order should exist; that the eldest son should be looked upon as the representative of the family, while the younger sons should regard it as their lot—and not the worse lot in the sight of God and the angels—to carve out a new fortune for themselves. I believe this to be a Divine institution, and that God contemplated it when He established the family life as the basis of human society. But just because it is an order ordained of God, man shall not make an idol of it. A certain free play in the working of an order or an institution is essential to the well-being and progress of society. If God had so ordered all the dispensations, that the elder son was constituted invariably the organ of His communication with the household, the tribe, the race, it would have instituted a caste instead of a principle of order, and the great majority of our race would, in that case, be outcast from their birth. That this rule of the elder might not become a tyrannous thing, that the younger sons of the house might feel that they too had a man's part to play on the theatre of life, a part which might easily become grander and more glorious than that of the firstborn, God, at great critical moments, seems to have broken through the order, and made the younger

the heir of the promises and the organ of His revelation to mankind. Jacob is a notable, a typical instance. The case of David is hardly less remarkable, 1 Sam. xvi. 6-13. And Paul in the spiritual family illustrates the same principle; the youngest born of the apostles, one in his own estimation hardly meet to be called an apostle, laboured more abundantly than they all, and was crowned with the most glorious success. But these arbitrary selections, as they appear at first sight, in reality, when we look more closely, are found to deliver the institution of primogeniture from arbitrariness; and they show to us that the Will which rules the world maintains its freedom under the guidance of its wisdom, and remits to no institution, however useful or honourable, the supreme power in the conduct of human affairs. It seems as though, knowing man's inherent propensity to formalism, the Lord had visibly broken through, from time to time, the very forms which He had Himself established, that He might show decisively that forms can have noble use alone in the hands of the free. Two singular instances of this, closely parallel to each other, are to be found in the numbers of the tribes of Israel and of the apostles of Christ. We talk familiarly of twelve tribes and of twelve apostles. But were there truly twelve or thirteen in each case? The question is by no means easy to answer. The tribe of Joseph was split into two. Theoretically, it is easy to regard the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh as forming together the one tribe of Joseph. But practically we must remember that the tribe of Ephraim was the most powerful and masterful of the tribes until the rise of the house of David. If any tribe might be looked upon as complete, certainly it would be the tribe of Ephraim. So that, looking at it in the light of actual history, we should be compelled to reckon thirteen, but for the fact that the separation of the tribe of Levi for the priesthood reduced to twelve the number of tribes claiming tribal settlement in Canaan, and active in the spheres of industry, politics, and war. Similarly, it is an open

question how far the place of Judas among the Twelve was lawfully filled up by the election of Matthias. It is far from clear that Peter and the infant Church were not acting hastily in this election and ordination of a successor to the apostate. We hear the name of Matthias only, and then he disappears from history. While we soon meet with an apostle of the Lord's election, who, if Matthias was duly called, raises the number of the apostles to thirteen. Is not this uncertainty, this fringe of doubt, left hanging around the numbers in these important and critical instances with a set purpose, that men might not make an idol of the number? That men might not think in the one case that the firstborn were the world's sole masters, nor dream in the other that a college of twelve was essential to the conduct of all the great spiritual movements of mankind.

II. The question of the birthright seems to us to be one on which there is, popularly at any rate, a good deal of misunderstanding. We will look at it a little more closely, before we proceed to consider the unavailing repentance which will form the topic of a second discourse.

There is something which reaches beyond the mere historico-representative character, in the history of these twain. Most of the earnest and generous students of the Old Testament would, we imagine, if they were to make frank confession, sympathise with Esau as a wronged and ill-used man. A sentiment of pity for the big, burly hunter, so helpless in the hands of the subtle and masterly Jacob, takes possession of us as we read the history. It seems a hard penalty to pay for a moment's weakness under the pressure of the pangs of hunger; while the crafty treacherous falsehood by which the blessing as well as the birthright was won from him enlists us wholly as to that transaction on his side. This sentiment of compassion is much strengthened by the vague impression that, through the craft of Jacob, Esau suffered a terrible and irreparable loss. And younger sons, as they see the paternal acres, the family mansion, and the dignity of the

family name, passing to the elder, are prone to make the same moan, and to reckon themselves the predestined victims of the social order of the world. Learn from this history how the matter really stands. Esau had all the birthright which he honestly cared for ; while Jacob had simply that birthright which, blessed be Christ, is within reach of every child of every household upon earth. Do not waste your pity upon Esau, on the ground of what he lost. Pity him rather on the score of what he did not care to win. It would be a great mistake to suppose that Jacob's treachery left the elder brother a broken and ruined man ; on the contrary, the ruin in the worldly sense fell on the man who won the birthright ; and though the blessing was added, he went a broken and halting man to the end of his days. That exceeding great and bitter cry, which was wrung from the disinherited when he saw the paternal blessing following the birthright, did not continue to wail through his life. He was a warm-hearted, loving, and generous man, though of fiery passion. The loss of the good old Isaac's benediction struck him to the heart ; but we are wrong in supposing that it remained a burden on his life. Nothing of the kind ; it had been better for him if it had been so. But the fury seems soon to have passed away, probably too his regrets. He became a chieftain of wealth and renown, rich, strong, illustrious. We meet with him again, and there is no trace of a shadow over his life. "And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost. And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him : and they wept. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children ; and said, Who are those with thee ?

And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant. Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves. And he said, What meanest thou by all this drama which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in thy sight of my lord. And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.” (Gen. xxxiii. 1–9.) “And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had gotten in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land where they were strangers could not bear them, because of the cattle. Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir. Esau is Edom. (Gen. xxxvi. 6–8.) Read the catalogue of his princely descendants, and remember that Edom played a splendid part in the political, and especially the commercial, history of the oriental world. Esau lost that, and that alone which his soul had no love for, and no power to use to honour. But he won that in which his soul delighted; he passed a lifetime of splendid and careless prosperity, and in a good old age went down to his grave in peace.

And what did Jacob win by his birthright—his right of the firstborn? Simply the power to become God’s pilgrim, the power to win a lofty height of honour and renown by life-long patience, by heroic struggle, by wearing, wasting toils. What good shall this birthright do to me, said the hungry hunter, mad for the mess pottage which the thrifty Jacob sold. But what good did the birthright do to the supplanter who bought it, and filched the blessing with it? None, absolutely none, in the sense in which they talk of “good” who are reckoning gains. It drove him forth from the very hour when he stole his father’s blessing, an exile to a distant land. It made him for long years, his best years, a hireling in

nsman's house. It exposed him to precisely the of trick which he himself had practised, in a matter deeper moment to his affection; for it imperilled the winning of the woman whom he tenderly loved. He had served for long years as a hireling for a day's wage, it brought him back at length to the fold of the promised Canaan. Rich in the wealth of the East, he drew near the borders. His soul was in perturbation when he heard that Esau was coming to meet him. The wrong which his brother had done rose up freshly before him in all its disgraceful details, and he could hardly believe in the hunter's generous forgiveness as he cowered a suppliant at his feet.

Entered at length on the land of his inheritance, he found it had broken out in his home and embitters his life. The grief which struck to the heart through his dearest affections. "Here I buried Rachel" is the epitaph of a great wrong; and when Joseph was not, he felt that he would go down mourning to the grave. At length the land of his inheritance refused to sustain him; and the old pilgrim, with one foot in the grave, goes forth once more an exile—the second and final exile—into a land where the sons for whom he won and held the birthright were destined for centuries to writhe and moan as he. What good did this birthright do to him?

When you look at the things which are seen, which are before you in view when birthrights are in question, Esau, the hardly used man, the victim, had most unquestionably the more referable lot. The time came when he stood as a suppliant before Jacob, and Jacob bowed himself at his feet. There was no malignant spirit at work here, as we are sometimes tempted to conceive of it, making Esau's life wretched and broken, while Jacob's was heaped high with all which could gladden a grasping and sensual man; on the contrary, the chosen son won only that which Esau would not have cared to lift if it had been at his very feet. Esau lost only that which would have been life long a torment to his easy, jovial, sensual

nature, which he would have prayed to get rid of, which he would in some way have got rid of, if it had clung to him, no matter at what cost. There were some, remember, who, finding their herds of swine in peril, prayed even the merciful Saviour "to depart out of their coasts." Jacob seized a bitter inheritance as far as this world was concerned, by his clever impersonation; while Rebekah, who prompted and managed it, paid a yet heavier price for it; in this world she never saw her darling more.

What he won was power with God and with man—a spiritual prince; power to pray, and to conquer by prayer; power to trust and to hope in God's mercy through stern struggles and bitter miseries; and power to reach a hand through death and lay up the hope of his soul with God on high. The heart which could crave for a spiritual thing, which pined to be a child of promise which clung to the traditions of his fathers and the hopes of his house, all which Esau scorned, God trained by suffering to aim continually at higher and yet higher things. He won, in a word, a high place in God's high school of discipline, and a name of renown as a spiritual hero in time and in eternity. This was practically his gain; and it is precisely this which God places fairly within your reach. You too may be the sons of promise; "power to become the sons of God" is the birthright which in Christ is yours. Jacob, no doubt, and most justly, seems to you the grander man as compared with Esau, and his life the nobler and more glorious life. Then live it. All that he won you may win. Make yourself a prince of God by wrestling prayer. The birthright of broad acres and family honours may pass to your elder. The birthright of hard work, stern struggle, strong effort, high aspiration, disciplined power, victorious faith, eternal renown and joy, is yours. Christ has won it, and freely bestows it—no younger son's portion but the birthright of the eldest, the only-begotten son, glorious through time and eternity. It may be that many a younger son may read these words; many a one

may be tempted to bemoan himself that the younger's portion, the lot of toil and struggle, has fallen to him in life. Well ! if it be so, bless God for it. If the lot of the younger be toil and struggle, if it falls to them only to open new paths, not without peril and pain, win by earnest and patient effort strength and wisdom, and to take the leader's place in the battle-field of life, don't moan over it if it has fallen to you, but again say bless God for it. The nobler, the richer, the larger inheritance, is yours. Pity, do not despise, but pity the elders who sit clothed in purple and fine linen, feasting sumptuously every day. It would be a strange story if it were fairly written out, the history of younger sons, with a just estimate of what they have done in comparison with the elder for the service and progress of the world. The eldest born, the heirs, with the inheritance which the past has lazily left to them ; the younger sons, with the domain of wisdom, strength, and influence, which their own right hand, God helping them, has won. Jacob seems to you the petted child of fortune, the chosen favourite of heaven, and Esau the wretched reproach, outcast, spurned alike of man and of God, then take Jacob's inheritance ; take it, it is fairly yours. Spurn sinners, which the devil is putting into your hand. Be content with the pilgrim's toils and struggles, the name is the reward, the everlasting portion ; and with the words of the pilgrim's hymn upon your lips pass on your way.

“ Contented now upon my thigh
I halt, till life's short journey end ;
All helplessness, all weakness, I
On Thee alone for strength depend ;
Nor have I power from Thee to move ;
Thy nature and Thy name is Love.

Lame as I am, I take the prey ;
Hell, earth, and sin, with ease o'ercome ;
I leap for joy, pursue my way,
And, as a bounding hart, fly home ;
Through all eternity to prove
Thy nature and Thy name is Love.”

Foreign Pulpit.

THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING.

BY M. LE PASTEUR E. DE PRESSENSÉ, PH.D

(TRANSLATED BY REV. R. S. ASHTON, B.A.)

CHAPTER III.

Suffering in its bearing on Conversion.

“My son, be not weary of his correction.”—PROV. iii. 11.

I HAVE spoken of our misery and of our hope. We seen comfort arise even from suffering, since the deemer bore our sorrows, and transformed death, whi the sum of them all, into a free sacrifice of love, a offering, acceptable to His Father. Suffering, how has not disappeared from the world since that grea molation, and not one tear less has been shed on since it was sprinkled with atoning blood. Eden ha been reopened, and the lamentations of the desolate rise from our midst, drowning the songs of joy. this permanence of suffering? How can we explain fact that affliction and pardon subsist together? Our answers the question. “My son,” says God to the ferer, “do not be weary of My correction.” In words, there is nothing in your present affliction to you despair, not even when it blasts everything ar you and bows you down to the dust whither you ar soon to descend. Do not grow weary beneath its cruel strokes. A great design is being carried on regard to you. To show the beneficent result of si ing, with reference to the unconverted man, will b object of this discourse and the best commentary on text.

Let us first of all acknowledge that suffering is alt

in character as soon as we enter into possession of the Divine favour. It is no longer absolute and irremediable ; it forms part of the plan of Divine love. It has therefore undergone a radical transformation. An unpardoned world would be like the earth in the days of the deluge, when it was wholly covered with a black and stormy night, and when the darkness of the sky corresponded to the darkness of the abyss. It is not so now ; pardon has caused a brighter light than that of the rainbow to shine amidst the terrible gloom ; Divine love irradiates the awful scene. The waters, it is true, still cover our shores, and fold them in a sombre winding-sheet. Affliction moves on like a wave that breaks upon every bank ; but then on this sea there falls the rich light of a clear sky. Let us never forget that we no longer inhabit a world subject to the curse ; the sentence has been blotted out. It has pleased God to reconcile all things to Himself by the blood of the cross. As long as this cross rises between our world and heaven, it will be the august sign of this reconciliation. On the accursed tree the curse ended, and human history henceforth unfolds itself beneath the eye of a merciful God, who can make all things work together for our everlasting good. This is the predominant and capital fact. A message of peace has been proclaimed ; a tender and glorious blessing hovers over our world.

True, suffering has not ceased to bear its character of chastisement. Evil still begets death, and sin has lost nothing of its bitterness ; but then chastisement is not the execution of a decree against which there is no appeal. Redeeming love presides over it, as over our whole life ; it is present in our sufferings. The hand that strikes is the hand that saves ; and instead of the sword which wounds only to kill, I behold the paternal rod. Thus, far from there being any contradiction between pardon and affliction, they both tend to the same end. In my afflictions I find all my pardon, and in the chastisements which descend upon me all the love of the Redeemer.

It is not enough, however, to understand that in a general way affliction forms part of the plan of Divine love ; we must seek to know how it helps to realize it.

1. First of all, it acts as a dyke against the overflow of evil, it incessantly restrains and thrusts it back. Imagine a rising ocean tide with no ebb, incessantly advancing, and covering first the rocks along the shore, then the vallies, then the plains, then the mountains, engulfing fields and towns, urging on its way without a pause, inflexibly pursuing its devastating course till all life had disappeared. This is the picture of what evil would be if left to itself, without suffering to restrain it. Imagine all lusts, all passions, all evil desires, meeting with no obstacle, gradually accumulating hour by hour, and tell me what would become of the moral world. Man would attain to the infinite in evil. But the infinite of evil is destruction and annihilation, and at the foot of the slope of sin is the bottomless pit ! But every day this formidable flood of iniquity is held back by an irresistible power ; sin finds its limit in suffering ; passion strikes against pain as against a fatal bourne, where it perishes ; lust is quenched in disgust ; however insatiable the thirst for pleasure, the cup of delight always contains bitter and terrible dregs which compel the most eager lips to turn from it ; and death is there, to say to the raging waves of our dissolute passions, " Thus far shall ye go, and no farther ! " Thus far, namely to that grave-stone against which evil always dashes itself at last ! In short, it is a fact that if anything prevents our world from being destroyed by its own corruption, if there is a healthful substance, a purifying salt to stay this putrefaction, it is suffering and death. Yes, however startling the paradox may appear, pain is a restraining and preserving power in this sinful world.

2. But suffering is not a blessing simply because it acts as a restraint ; but also, and especially, because it acts as a preparative. It is a bridle, but also a spur urging us towards the cross. Let us call to mind what our redemption is ; we shall then understand the important

high affliction plays in the work of salvation. There was sent down a pure and holy Man, a true representative of the fallen race, because He was the Eternal Word, the begotten Son, who had formed it in His image. He bore on His innocent head the burden of its condemnation. He entered into perfect fellowship with its sufferings. He was "the Man of sorrows;" and therefore He was the representative of the fallen race. Crowned with thorns, insulted with the grossest outrages, burdened with a cruel cross, the symbol of all that is most terrible in sin, He ascended Calvary and expired there. Now it was only the sin of humanity, its fundamental sin, hatred against God, which drove the nails into His lacerated body. He was presented as a spectacle to the earth which cursed Him, to the heaven which veiled itself in darkness, and to the suffering of all generations entering into His soul, at the same time raising this suffering to the height of a sacrifice by acceptance of all the consequences of sin, not one of which He had deserved. He rendered thereby a perfect satisfaction of Divine justice, a glorification, an atonement, a striking retractation of the rebellion of the first Adam; and so that which seemed to be the curse became the blessing, even salvation. It was thus the heart of man replied to the heart of God. An infinite love, an unlimited obedience,—such was the cross. By its cost heaven and earth were reconciled, and salvation was consummated.

It was in our name that the great work of that atonement was performed, and we can derive benefit from it only as we ratify it. Apart from this, the Son of God died and expiated our faults to no purpose. Only he will be saved who unites himself to Christ, not in the view of offering again a sacrifice which was perfect for him, but in order to make it his own by an earnest faith and a living faith. If the imputation of his merits was all external, it would be found that he obeyed in order to dispense us from obeying. If it had been His object, He need not have left heaven at

all. True, we are not shut up to our own merits ; we believe most firmly that we could never succeed in weaving a wedding garment such as would allow of our sitting down at our heavenly Father's banquet. We must receive it from the Redeemer's hands, and this robe is His own royal robe, which He has dyed in the crimson of His own blood. We cannot appear before God except as we are clothed in His righteousness. But He will not clothe us in this until we have approached Him with an ardent desire to receive His grace, and until, like the poor daughter of Israel who met Him one day, we have seized with a trembling hand that holy robe with which we must be covered. In other words, we can only share in His merits through the faith which unites us to Him. What He did for us eighteen hundred years ago is of no value without this faith, this personal adherence to Him.

Now, adhering to His death, what is this but consenting to die with Him ? What is adhering to His crucifixion but becoming one and the same plant with Christ crucified ? What is adhering to His cross, but ascending it ? Ascending it, I say, and dying there ! This does not simply consist in striking one's breast, as the women of Jerusalem did, or in prostrating one's self before the cross, like the centurion, or in preaching about it like an apostle ; it consists in ascending it, and in really renouncing every kind of life that does not proceed from Him, every thought which is opposed to Him, and even our own will ; it consists in crucifying the members of the old man, with his affections and lusts, and in dying entirely in Him and through Him. Whoever offers salvation on other conditions sadly degrades it, not knowing what is the real union between the heart of man and the heart of God. This because salvation, free though it is, is nevertheless a noble action, an immense work, and because the crucifixion was followed by the greatest of miracles, and because the Spirit of God Himself has been given to accomplish in what it was impossible for us to accomplish, I mean to slay us and restore us to life, by uniting us closely to the

crucified One and to the risen One. Tell me, you who do not believe in any external imputation, why the day of Pentecost came after the day of Calvary, why such extraordinary help was offered to man for an act so simple, and which would cost so little. I am well aware that God in His goodness sees in each of us the germ of growing faith, and does not wait until this germ has attained its full development before giving us the benefit of His Son's redemptive sufferings; but still the germ must exist, our crucifixion must have begun, and we must be united in heart to the holy Victim. This can only be through the mighty help of Divine grace. But grace is not celestial magic, it does not free us from the duty of exercising our will: it persuades us to consent to this internal crucifixion, by which the merit of the Divine Sufferer rebounds on us. It employs every means to bring us to this, and of all conceivable means none can be more efficacious than suffering. Hence the important part which it plays in the work of our personal redemption.

Behold at what a distance from this cross all men stand, if we consider their natural dispositions. Behold the attitude of the first spectators of the crucifixion. With the exception of the little group composed of a disciple and three women, among whom I recognise Mary, the mother of my Saviour; with the exception of a poor thief who repents, and a heathen centurion who falls on his knees before Christ,—what do we see? A rude multitude, who regard this punishment as the execution of a deserved sentence, because they believe only in visible honour and success. They can feel nothing but contempt for a *crucified* Saviour, and everything here is repulsive to their carnal mind. There is the formalistic and fanatical Jew, who cannot conceive of the kingdom of God except in a terrestrial form, and the Roman soldier, who has but one kind of worship and belief—material force: what is there here for them? Here is the Pharisee, the scribe, the slave of old and lifeless traditions, and who, in the name of the prophets, condemns Him whom they

announced: for him this great suffering is a triumph. Behold the man of reason, the sage, the Sadducee, believes only in the visible; did you notice him as he passed, wagging his head? Observe, these men are the faithful representatives of their whole generation. In every part of the world you would have found multitudes who felt no attraction towards, or enthusiasm for anything but glory and power. Everywhere you would have met the Jewish doctor crying out "Blasphemy," "Impiety," as he heard men talk of a God who humbled Himself. The wise men of Athens, Alexandria, and Rome are just like those of Judæa; and all philosophers of the day, the worshippers of human reason would only have felt disdain for a dying Christ. The apostle was not mistaken when he said that the cross was a stumbling-block to the Jew, and folly to the Greek. What an immeasurable distance between them all and this cross!

The distance is not less great between it and the world of the present day. Suppose that the real cross, the shameful tree, the gibbet, were set up in our cities; should we not see gathered round it once more the materialistic masses who seek only for the bread which perishes, and who shrink from sacrifice and its symbols? Here again are the lovers of empty forms and of the letter which kills. Have you not seen the wise men of to-day pass by it with the same ironical smile, and the same shaking of the head, as eighteen centuries ago? And yet, in order that men may be saved, they must traverse this infinite distance, they must quit the ranks of the mockers and the profane, and, braving their insults, must prostrate themselves before this instrument of punishment. Yea, further, they must be willing to submit themselves to a moral crucifixion. The Jew must accept what really is a stumbling-block in his way, and the Greek must adore what in his view is foolishness. What can induce these scornful ones to bow the knee and the head before this cross? What can produce in them

immense transformation? The grace of God, we answer, and the grace of God through suffering.

"He that humbleth himself," it is written, "shall be exalted." Humility alone can prepare us to receive pardon and salvation from the hands of Jesus Christ. He did not come, He did not die, for those who are satisfied with themselves and with their condition; or at least such render what He has done for them utterly valueless. He who believes in himself does not believe in Christ. He who lives under the delusion of his own worth, power, and happiness, wishes neither for a Redeemer, nor for a Comforter. He only who has come to know how vain is his happiness, how deceptive his strength, and how poor his worth, longs for grace as the thirsty man longs for the running stream. Penitent and contrite hearts alone are made for the Saviour. If He happens to pass near a man who thinks himself rich in knowledge, merit, and glory, such a man, far from calling Him to him, will reject Him, drive Him away, and speak evil of Him. But if this same man has been brought to see that he is poor, blind, and naked, then, though a thousand obstacles may intervene between him and the Saviour, he will call Him, he will cry to Him, he will throw himself into His arms, he will lay hold of His grace, he will take refuge beneath His cross, and you will not tear him from it again. Do you now see what is the purpose of suffering? It is suffering that will come upon the proud man, that will tear in pieces the wretched garment in which he has wrapped himself, that will rob him of all his tatters, that will extinguish the deceptive glimmer which he regarded as the light, and that will lay him on the road, crushed, wounded, humbled, in one word penitent, so that when the good Samaritan passes by that way he will suffer himself to be raised by Him, and will bless the hand that binds up his wounds.

We shall be told perhaps that the moral suffering which is at the bottom of a heart destitute of God should suffice to draw it to Jesus Christ, and that external

sufferings are useless. Far from this being the case, deep feelings often slumber within us; and if at times they manifest their presence for a moment, they may be so easily deadened that they have no power over the soul. Nothing proves more clearly the real and terrible character of our fall than the ease with which man can forget himself amidst the most ordinary pleasures. He never becomes thoroughly accustomed to them; his original nobleness is seen in the sorrow which suddenly comes over him in the midst of his joy; and his tears tell us that he is the offspring of God. But these tears dry up quickly beneath the sun of prosperity; his melancholy serves as a dissipation, and the secret suffering, which prevents him from being altogether satisfied, does not render him altogether unhappy. Too frequently it happens that he pitches his tent in a flowery land, and exclaims "It is good to be here." Woe to him, if the tree which he has planted continues for a long while to yield abundant shade, freshness, and fruits. His conscience is deadened, his heart grows fat, to use the energetic language of the prophet; he loses the sense of the Divine, and along with the feeling of his wretchedness he loses the feeling of his destiny; he loses both his sadness and his dignity. Certainly, the most terrible of all chastisements which can be inflicted on the impenitent soul is that of being given up to earthly happiness. It seems sometimes as if God treated the ungrateful man, who seeks for nothing but enjoyment, as He treated His people who lusted after the fleshpots of Egypt. He overwhelms with material blessings such as desire no others, and they succumb beneath this mere earthly prosperity, for which they have sold their immortal souls. Some fortunes fill one with alarm. When you see the wicked man prospering, growing like a fine tree that is putting forth its leaves; when you see him loaded with honours, riches, and power, do not be so mean as to envy him. Tremble for him. It was thus that Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and this hardening was simply the fitting punishment for

s impenitence. If God had wished to ruin our earth, after sin had entered, He would have left it in all the beauty and splendour of the first day after its creation ;

He had wished to transform it into a hell, He would have left it like a paradise, He would have given us up to all the corruption of impure delights and to all the seductions of unhallowed prosperity. The immortal soul would have rolled on from one degree of degradation to another, and not a spark of Divine life would have been left, and then we should have known what the second death is, of which the first is a very feeble image. The wicked man's blessed prosperity reminds one of an azure sky during the prevalence of an epidemic ; the breeze is pleasant to breathe, but it brings death with it.

God wanted to save us, and this is why He let suffering loose when we had let sin loose. This is why life is hard, and why we eat our bread in the sweat of our face, and why thorns and thistles everywhere. The greatness of our afflictions has been proportioned to the persistent character of our folly. The good and holy God makes an inroad on our life, devastates it, and withers it up in bloom. He overthrows our tent with the breath of His mouth ; He breaks our idols, and smites on the right and on the left all that we hold most precious. Every guilty satisfaction is followed by intolerable suffering ; it touches the most sensitive fibres of our being, and teaches repentance to us on the ruins of all that we have loved and pursued. He leads us into the depths of the desert, or rather He creates a solitude around us, that nothing may interfere with our hearing His terrible voice proclaiming, "Thou hast sinned, thou hast sinned." Then conscience awakes ; terror lays hold of the guilty man ; and, seized with mortal fear, he utters a cry of anguish and feels that he is lost. At this moment God seeks to urge him to the cross, where full atonement has been made, and where everything will be set right.

Thus suffering, under the influence of grace, fills up the infinite distance between man and the cross. Con-

sider what it has wrought in the spectators of the crucifixion, whom we have shown to be indifferent or hostile and who reappear in every succeeding age. What commotion has been produced in their ranks! I do not mean to say that the transformation is the same in all. No, suffering of itself does not convert the soul, and an unhappy man still possesses the right to ruin himself. But it has at least broken up to some extent the compact mass of the enemies of Christ, from amongst whom there will come forth in all ages disciples ready to die with an for Him. The man who is now His ardent disciple and who is ready to follow the Lamb wherever He shall go, to use the touching expression of the martyrs Lyons, once passed quite carelessly by the cross, he beheld nothing in it but a spectacle, or a merited disgrace, or perhaps a religious symbol, without meaning for him. Whence has this great change arisen? The hand God has weighed heavily upon him; it has smitten him severely. He was satisfied with himself, he had no higher aspiration; but he staggered beneath the blow that struck him. He awoke as from a dream; his conscience spoke. He remembered his sins, and sought to turn his mind from them; he could not succeed. He looked about him, but found no rest; then he sought from above. A Divine hand was stretched out toward him, and he laid hold of it. The cross spoke a new language to him; he felt that it had been set up for him and in spite of the jeers of the bystanders he prostrate himself before the crucified One; he united himself to Him, and that for ever. And you also, learned doctor, scornful philosopher, who lately shook your head at the holy Victim, I have seen you at His feet, shedding tears by the side of the publican and of the sinful woman. The fact is, a day came when you found yourself grappling with some sinister reality of life. You could no longer discuss or laugh with your disciples; you wanted to be sustained, strengthened, comforted, and you found nothing for your agonized heart in the forms of a tradi-

tional religion, or in the ingenious arguments of human reasoning ; and then beneath the actor who plays his part there awoke the man, the man saddened, humbled, and as feeble as the most ignorant and the most despised ; like Bartimeus, you flung away your cloak, and in your turn you said, " Son of David, have mercy upon me, for I perish."

Thus from age to age recruits are added to this saddened and comforted band, who are determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ crucified. Through the direct action of grace, suffering had prepared the way for Christ in the old world by attacking not merely the individual, but also the lost race of man whom it had mercilessly and unceasingly pursued from religion to religion, from illusion to illusion ; and it was through a wasted world, reduced to the condition of a desert, that the road was made which was to lead to Him. The history of the old world ended with a humbling defeat, and the vanquished adherents of paganism were the firstfruits of Christianity. It was out of Jewry, when humbled and captive and groaning beneath the yoke of the foreigner, it was from despised Galilee, that the apostles and first disciples went forth.

Ever since the Redeemer came amongst men, and called to them from His cross, suffering has been His great prophet and forerunner, but suffering modified, mingled with blessing, as befits a pardoned world, but yet traversing the earth with the axe of John the Baptist. The angel of the Apocalypse, flying in the midst of heaven with the message of the Divine word, holds in one hand the gospel and in the other a sword.

What is it that stays for awhile the turmoil of worldly life ? What is it that introduces a serious thought into the house of pleasure ? What is it that, amidst the calculations of ambition and the course of business, excites a higher thought, a nobler aspiration ? What is it that troubles the satisfied conscience ? What is the dart which pierces the proud or frivolous man as he pursues

his way along the path of life? Is it not pain, or rather is it not God present in pain, and visiting us through it, and by this breach entering the heart He desires to save? Such is the answer to the question we asked at the beginning of this discourse. It was the suffering of a God who humbled Himself that saved us, and it is suffering dispensed by this same God which prepares the sinner to believe in the crucified One. Suffering constitutes the first element in the great atonement of Calvary. Suffering also makes us seize the salvation thus wrought for us, but which must be consummated in us. It must therefore pursue its work on this redeemed earth, where sin still dwells; and we must recognise even in its most distressing manifestations the infinite love which seeks to save our souls at all costs.

And now you can see what blessing and comfort our text yields to the afflicted. "My son, be not weary of God's correction." I could understand the afflicted man becoming weary if he knew not whence his suffering comes, if he were compelled to regard it as an inexorable law or an unhappy chance, if he felt himself grappling with an impersonal power, crushing everything in its passage without any concern. I could understand his growing weary if he were obliged to see in suffering a curse, the execution of a rigorous sentence. But why grow weary when it is God who chastens us, and when He chastens us only in order to save us? No; let there be no despair, no irritation. Afflicted one, a great design, the greatest of all designs, is being carried out in regard to yourself. You thought neither of God nor of your soul; you went where your heart led you, and your heart was leading you to perdition. You had not one serious thought; you lived in time and for time. Jesus Christ was near you, and you did not suspect it; and yet your life was passing away, ever passing away; and soon the solemn probation would have ended: when lo! God stopped you. He put His hand on your heart, and you found it heavy; but He only did it to dispel your illusion, and

and you to throw yourself humbled and penitent at the feet of your Saviour, who had so long been waiting on you.

Do not complain ! Do not say that this affliction is needless. You could not have shaken off your chains ; it was necessary that they should be broken, and rudely broken. Indeed, you had no idea that there was any other end to be pursued on earth than to seek enjoyment and riches, and to win glory. A nobler world appeared to you ; something hitherto unknown and Divine awoke in you ; you sighed for a deliverance, the want of which you had never felt before. You remembered that there is a God, a Saviour ; and a new light shone on the words of the gospel which you had not read since you took it out in your infancy. Therefore do not grow weary. It is God who is rebuking you and addressing you in His most searching and solemn appeals. It is the great crisis of your moral life. Behold, you are overthrown by the force of the blow that has struck you, you lie prostrate near the cross. Will you rise full of selfless pride ? or will you not rather understand that there is now only one course to be taken, and that is to become a Christian, and to die to yourself that you may live with your Saviour ? Oh, listen, listen to this Divine voice ! " Hear the rod, and him who hath appointed

Do not allow yourself to be simply stunned by the force of the blow ; listen to what God says to you as He addresses you. Let your sufferings remind you of your

Do not grow weary even amid such distressing trials ; a perfectly free and most generous pardon is offered you ; comfort flows in abundance from the holy words of Christ. Let him that is athirst come and drink. Let not this blessed, this hallowed time of affliction pass away. Have nothing to do with the evil and vain consolations the world offers you. This is the day of the Lord ; for this day and for this hour you came. This is the decisive meeting between you and your God, who has visited your abode. Remember that affliction

may be useless as well as profitable, and that nothing is more distressing, more likely to produce despair than suffering, which has passed in vain over a family or a soul. Ah, if you would but respond, in this your day, to the calls of Divine mercy ! Do not grow weary now that the God of love is rebuking you. Say to yourself that if you refuse to listen to Him, if you reject Him when He speaks to you with such power, you will not only find yourself a prey to bitter remorse, but also subjected to the hopeless and awful suffering which accompanies condemnation. What is hell but profitless suffering ? You are not made for hell any more than other creatures. Heaven is reserved for you, but on the condition of your humbling yourself to the earth and entering by the low and narrow gate which alone leads to it, and of your allowing yourself to be persuaded by your sufferings to be united in heart with the only suffering that is accepted of God,—that of the holy and just One on the accursed tree. “My son, be not weary of his correction.”

On Calvary, near the Redeemer's cross, I see two other crosses. On one an impenitent man dies blaspheming ; on the other dies a man with blessings on his lips, but whose limbs were equally lacerated by the nails. This is the picture of humanity divided into its two great sections. In the midst, set up between heaven and earth, is the cross of the Saviour of the world, rising as the sign of salvation offered to all. Not one among the sons of men is free from the affliction that has come upon the whole race, and it may be said without exaggeration that they are all nailed to a painful cross. It is not for them to choose between happiness and suffering, between an agreeable life and a cross. They are all born nailed like culprits to a cross ; only it remains to be seen on which of the two crosses they will place themselves, for they are free to choose. Either they will choose the accursed cross, whence outrages are uttered against the Divine sufferer, and then their present sufferings will only be a prelude to the terrible sufferings of the life to come.

they will choose the cross whence blessing proceeds, cross from which prayer is addressed to Christ; and 1, from the fatal and inevitable crucifixion resulting from the natural condition of man, they will rise to the voluntary and holy crucifixion which unites us with Christ, which plants us together with Him in His death, they will hear these words from His lips, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Even here below we will be in this paradise; for to suffer with Christ, being pardoned and blessed by Him, is already heaven, Christian affliction, as we shall show in our next discourse, thus becomes the source of perfect joy. *Our sacrifice* indeed is made, and since we must suffer and be crucified here below, we are willing to suffer with Him in order that by-and-by we may reign with Him, and so forever in His presence.

DECORATION PRECEDES DRESS.—"People who submit to great physical suffering that they may have themselves unseemly clothed, bear extremes of temperature with little attempt at regulation. Humboldt tells us that an Orinoco Indian, though regardless of bodily comfort, will yet labour for a fortnight to purchase pigment wherewith to make himself adorned; and that the same woman who would not hesitate to appear naked but without a fragment of clothing on would not commit such a breach of decorum as to go out undressed. Voyagers find that coloured beads and trinkets are more prized by wild tribes than are calicoes and broadcloths. . . . Like relations hold with the mind. Among mental acquisitions, the ornamental goes before the useful; knowledge that conduces to personal wellbeing is postponed to that which brings applause. Especially is this to be observed in the other sex. . . . The reason of this lies in the fact that social needs have subordinated individual needs." HERBERT SPENCER *on Education*.

The Gospel according to *M*

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. J. H. GODWIN

BOOK I.

Introduction, and Ministry in Galilee

PART II. DIV. V. (Continued.)

Src. III. ²¹ And when Jesus passed over in the boat ag
 Applica- other side, a great multitude was gathered tog
 tion of Hlut: and He was by the lake. ²² And lo!
 Jairus.

Src. III. (Mark i. 21-18; Matt. ix. 18-28; Luke viii. 4) the country of the Gadarens Jesus returned with the disciples to where the people were expecting Him. Apparently on the same day present at the entertainment given by St. Matthew, whose house was at Capernaum (ii. 13), and who explicitly connects the event now related with the conversations which St. Mark has given before (ii. 15). A ruler of the synagogue came to seek help for a dying child. The Saviour left the feast for the house of sorrow, going with the afflicted father through the streets of the town, where his house was. Their progress as they went through the streets was hindered by the crowd; and further delay was caused by a sick woman, who was suffering from a disease which excluded her from society. She secretly touched the garment of Jesus, and became cured. Then, when required, openly declared her sickness and cure. In the delay a message came to the father, that his child was dead; but Jesus immediately encouraged him still to have faith. When at last they entered the house, the mourners were already there; Jesus dismissed them, and He, with His parents and three disciples, entered the chamber of death. He directed that the wants of the child should be supplied, and that the fact of its return from death should not be made known to others.

²¹ St. Matthew states that the return was to His own town, where the people were expecting Him.

²² Jairus belonged to the class of persons who had sought the favour of the centurion; but he does not appear to have gone with them (34). He did not copy the faith of the Roman, who only asked that he would command sickness to depart.

ers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name, and seeing
n, fell at His feet; ²³ and much entreated Him, saying,
little daughter is at the close of life: pray come, and
Thy hands on her that she may be restored; and she
live. ²⁴ And He went away with him.

And a great multitude was following Him, and pressing
n Him. ²⁵ And a certain woman, who had had an Cure of
sick woman
e of blood twelve years, ²⁶ and suffered much under
y physicians, and spent all that belonged to her, and
fited nothing, but rather became worse; ²⁷ hearing
ut Jesus, coming in the crowd behind, touched His
ment. ²⁸ For she said, If I may only touch His gar-
ats, I shall be restored. ²⁹ And directly the flow of her
od was dried up, and she knew in her body that she
healed of the disease.

And Jesus directly, fully knowing in Himself the
er proceeding from Him, turning round in the crowd,
l, Who touched My garments? ³¹ And His disciples

The words of St. Luke are, *she was dying*. The term used by St. Mat-
denotes the *end of life*, and not the *state of death*. It might be naturally
properly used when the latter was very near.

By her disease she was, according to law, unclean, and all that she
hed became unclean. (Lev. xv. 25.)

St. Matthew and St. Luke mention the fringe of the garment.

The conduct of the woman, in shunning publicity, is fully accounted for
be nature of her disease; and there is no reason to suppose that she ex-
ed to be cured, without the knowledge and will of Jesus. For such an
etation there was no ground; and if she had looked to the *garment* for
ing, it would not have been faith, but superstition.

The language of the evangelists in relating this miracle copies that of
us. He asked the question, not as needing information, but requiring
nowledgment. More than a partial declaration of what He knew would be
uitable in connection with the inquiry; and the nature of the sickness
ld itself make proper an impersonal reference to the cure.

said to Him, Thou seest the crowd pressing on Thee, and Thou sayest, Who touched Me? ³² And He was looking round to see her who did this. ³³ But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had been done for her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth. ³⁴ Then He said to her, Daughter, thy faith has restored thee, go away in peace; and be free from thy disease.

raising of
dead child.

³⁵ While He was still speaking, some came from the house of the ruler of the synagogue, saying, Thy daughter is dead: why still art thou troubling the Teacher? ³⁶ But Jesus directly hearing the words spoken, said to the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid: only have faith. ³⁷ And He allowed no one to follow with Him, except Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. ³⁸ And He came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and saw the clamor, some weeping and wailing much. ³⁹ And entering, He said to them, Why do you clamor and weep?

³² St. Luke says, *seeing she was not hid*; but this refers to her recognition by all. When the look of Jesus was fixed upon her, she would be known by all to be the person sought for. Her declaration was required, for the miracle could not be useful to others unless made known. Her faith alone is mentioned, and commended.

³⁵ The message is related also by St. Luke. It is not noticed by St. Matthew. He probably was not present, having remained as host in his own house, when Jesus left, and many of the guests.

³⁶ Without a *promise* of some kind, the expectation of a recovery from death would be improper. It would be presumption, and not faith. A promise is implied in the words related by St. Mark, and expressed in those of St. Luke: "Be not afraid; only have faith, and she shall be restored." A similar promise, and encouragement to faith, preceded the raising of Lazarus (John x. 40).

³⁹ In one sense, the child was dead; and in another sense, not so. The vital organs had ceased to act, but the change consequent in other cases did not follow here. The statements respecting Lazarus are similar (John xi.

a child did not die, but is sleeping. ⁴⁰ And they
 ided Him. But He, sending all out, took the father
 he child, and the mother, and those with Him, and
 it in where the child was laid. ⁴¹ And holding the
 d of the child, He said to her, Talitha, kumi—which
 interpreted, Maiden, I say to thee, arise. ⁴² And
 ectly the maiden stood up, and walked about; for she
 twelve years old. And they were surprised with
 ch astonishment. ⁴³ And He cautioned them strictly
 ; no one should know this; and directed something
 e given her to eat.

). In both, the purpose evidently was to intimate, not that life still
 ued, but that it would be speedily restored.

The Aramean words are translated, and the imperative mood is made
 ite by the clause interposed. On a few other occasions the Aramean
 s spoken by our Lord are given by the evangelist (vii. 34, viii. 33,
 4, and John xx. 16). It has been inferred from these cases, that He
 only used the same language; but the more probable conclusion
 be, that it was not used at all times.

In the raising of this child, and of Lazarus, the rule was observed,
 the help of Christ should be sought in faith. He offered to cure the
 but not to raise the dead: and Jairus, and the sisters of Lazarus,
 ed to Him for the preservation of life. A similar application was
 ably made in the only other similar case, which preceded this, when the
 of the widow of Nain was restored to her (Luke vii. 11). Some
 ledge of what had been done to the child was inevitable, and not
 airable; but the prohibition would prevent false expectations respect-
 what might be properly sought. Jesus was able to raise the dead, as
 as to cure the sick; and on three peculiar occasions His power was thus
 rised. But no encouragement was ever given to the expectation that
 would do this if requested. Therefore, it could not be sought in faith.
 he direction respecting food, it was shown that health was restored
 ell as life and that the ministry of friends was to be associated with the
 cle of the Lord. After this miracle, St. Matthew relates the cure of two
 men, and of a dumb demoniac, as taking place subsequently, probably
 he same day (ix. 27–32). The particulars of the second journey recorded
 St. Mark would require only a few days; and those which are given by

DIV. VI. *Departure from Capernaum.* (VI. 1-13.)

Sec. I.
Visit to
Nazareth.

¹ AND He departed thence, and went to the town of His family : and His disciples follow Him. ² And when the

St. Luke, in addition, would not require many. The cure of the centurion's servant, and the message from John, are also related by St. Matthew, the one with the miracles, viii. 5; the other with the effects of Christ's ministry, xi. 2. But the visit to Nain, and the dinner and discourse in the Pharisee's house, are mentioned only by St. Luke. These are all the events recorded of this period of time; and a few weeks would suffice for the second journey, as well as for the first. After the first journey, with four disciples, Jesus returned to Capernaum: Mark ii. 1; Luke v. 17; Matt. ix. 2. In the second journey, with the twelve apostles, there seem to have been three returns to Capernaum,—the first, soon after their selection, Luke vii. 1; Matt. viii. 5: the second, immediately before the interference of kindred, Mark iii. 20; Luke viii. 19; Matt. xii. 46: the third, from the country of the Gadarenes, Mark v. 21; Luke ix. 40; Matt. ix. 10.

Coming to Christ secures a medicine for all maladies.

Good received should be made known for the good of others.

Delays are no disadvantage to those who have faith.

Death and disease are subject to the authority of Christ.

DIV. VI. (Chap. vi. 1-13.) The account of the first period of our Lord's ministry in Galilee concludes with two brief narratives; the first showing how He was still rejected by His townsmen; and the second, how He provided for the subsequent publication of the gospel and the extension of His kingdom.

SEC. I. (Mark vi. 1-6; Matt. xiii. 53-58.) As Nazareth was visited before the first journey, so it was revisited after the second. Jesus again taught in the synagogue, and the people were again astonished; but they were still prejudiced on account of their acquaintance with His previous life and kindred. He therefore could not do there what He had done in other places. The narrative of St. Luke refers to the first rejection, which was from jealousy for Jewish privileges, and with an outbreak of popular violence (iv. 28). The second rejection was dissimilar in cause and character. The peculiar relation of Jesus to Nazareth would naturally occasion a repetition of His visit. The proverb respecting prophets was repeated on different occasions. Neither the question, or the proverb, are exactly alike.

me, He began to teach in the synagogue. hearing were much struck, saying, Whence to re these things? And what is the wisdom ven to Him? And are such works of power s hands? ³ Is not this the carpenter, the son id brother of James and Joses and Judah and nd are not His sisters here, related to us? were offended with Him. ⁴ But Jesus said to rophet is not without honour, except in the s family, and among kindred, and in his own and He was not able to do any work of power putting His hands on a few sick people, He 1. ⁶ And He wondered because of their want

went about the villages around, teaching. Sec. 1
called to the twelve, and began to send them Mission
Apostles.

left was Capernaum, that visited Nazareth. (Luke iv. 23.)
w says, *the son of the carpenter*. From the words of St. Mark
Jesus had shared the occupation of His mother's husband.
states that He made ploughs and yokes, thus presenting
piousness and an industrious life.
proverb is repeated John iv. 24, Luke iv. 24.
no deficiency of power in Him, but of faith in them.
different from *surprise*. The former may be awakened without
y to expectation which produces the latter. Common things
. Novelty is essential to the one sentiment, but not to the
ections often prevail against the strongest
).
quisite to some exercises of Divine power.

Mark vi. 7-13; Matt. x. 5-42; Luke ix. 1-6.) The twelve
g been some time with Jesus, as attendants, are now sent forth

forth, two and two; and He gave them authority over evil spirits.

⁸ And He directed them, that they should carry not ~~anything~~ for the road, but a staff only; no wallet, no bread, ~~and~~ copper for the purse; ⁹ but to wear sandals; and not put on two coats."

¹⁰ And He said to them, Wherever you enter into a house, there stay until you depart thence. ¹¹ And wh

on a limited mission, to preach the gospel, and perform miracles in His name. There is first a statement of the authority they received, and then a brief account of the directions given them. These respect preparation for the journey, and their subsequent conduct, when welcomed and when rejected. St. Luke's account is similar; agreeing with the first part of the address, of which the whole is given by St. Matthew. The directions would indicate that their mission now was for a short time; that they should commit themselves to the Divine care and protection; doing their appointed work and not seeking their own comfort; expecting sometimes success, and sometimes apparent failure.

⁷ St. Matthew gives the names of the apostles in pairs, and so does St. Luke; who also makes a similar statement respecting the seventy disciples subsequently sent forth,—they went two and two. St. Matthew mentions the restriction of their mission to the Jews, and their proclamation of the kingdom of heaven.

⁸ St. Matthew and St. Luke say, *not staves*. One would be taken by all travellers; more than one, by those who thought of defending themselves from possible assaults. St. Luke specifies the silver coin; St. Matthew the gold, silver and copper.

⁹ Extra sandals and garments, though sometimes convenient, would often be incumbrances; and for a short journey in warm weather they were not needful. The sandals were worn by those who were ready for travelling, as well as by those who were walking from place to place. (Exod. xii. 11.)

The narrative passes from the indirect to the direct style, which is preserved in the following verses.

¹⁰ A change of lodging would prolong their stay, or lessen their beneficial influence in the house.

¹¹ The shaking of the dust from the feet was a symbolical act, declaring to those who rejected the gospel that they became unholy. The last sentence of this verse, being wanting in some MSS., has been regarded as an interpolation from Matt. x. 15; but the words are not exactly the same.

: will not receive you, nor hearken to you, going away
ice shake off the dirt that is under your feet, for a
imony to them. Assuredly I declare to you, it will
more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of
gment, than for that town.

And they departing proclaimed that men should re-
t. ¹³ And they cast out many demons, and anointed
a oil many sick people, and cured them.

St. Luke states that they went from village to village, proclaiming the tidings, and healing everywhere.

They were probably directed to use oil, though this is not recorded ; and s did not anoint the sick, though on a few occasions He did something ar. As the shaking off the dirt from their feet was a *visible warning*, timony, to the impenitent, so the anointing of the sick was a *visible* ~~ice~~ to them of restored health ; and being done in the name of the Lord, ould direct attention from the apostles, and increase the faith in Him, h was the condition for every miracle, and the object of their mission. e is nothing to support the suppositions that oil was employed as a al means of cure, or as a supernatural medicine, either for the body or oul. Its use in connection with miraculous cures was only occasional. ymbolical use, on sacred and festive occasions, was common, and under- l by all. In all the sacred histories and services of the Old Testament, rial objects were *symbols* of the spiritual, but nothing more. The rial terms often connected in the Old Testament with spiritual objects invariably *metaphors*, and never indicate that material means were em- ed for spiritual effects. The New Testament should be interpreted rding to the analogies of the Old. Symbols are signs of truth, as words and have only the same kind of influence. Sprinkling, washing, cir- sion, are terms that primarily refer to bodily states ; when used for tual objects, they simply denote the purification of the mind. The ion of the twelve apostles marks the conclusion of the first part of the stry of Jesus in Galilee. It is so presented in the narrative of St. hew, where chaps. xi., xii., xiii. refer to the period in which the miracles ously related were performed. St. Matthew states that, after the rtare of the apostles, Jesus continued to teach, but gives no account of ministry during their absence (xi. 1). This is supplied by St. John, seems to have been with the Lord during a part of this time. He s that Jesus went to Jerusalem, some weeks before the second passover

- . mentioned by him, v. 1; vi. 4. The festival of Purim was in March, that of the passover in April. His presence not being expected at the former, there would not be the reason for absence which prevented His going to the latter (vii.). He returned from Jerusalem, before the controversy occasioned by the conduct of the disciples who plucked ears of corn; and was with them on two sabbath-days before the return of all the apostles (ii. 23; iii. 1). The narrative of the ministry of Jesus, in the next part, begins with the gathering together of all the apostles after their mission.

Christ's ministers receive from Him power for their appointed work.

When called to high service, they need not care for common wants.

The rejection of the greatest good leads to the greatest ill.

[The gospel of St. Mark has by some been deemed deficient in the exhibition of Christian doctrine, the plan and purpose of the work not being duly considered. The discourses of Christ are not recorded here, when the same truths are set forth in conduct which might also be declared in speech; and His death for the salvation of men, and the extension of His kingdom to the Gentiles, are subjects which belong to the second period of His ministry. But in the first period lessons of the highest importance were presented in the most effective way. According to the narrative already given, men saw in Him a *knowledge* above that of man, reaching to the secrets of the heart; and a *power* above that of man, to which all nature was subject. They saw in Him a *benevolence* above all human kindness, desiring the good of all; and a *purity and perfection* above all human excellence, manifesting the character and purpose of God. From all the words and actions of Jesus they learnt that *sin* may and must be forgiven as the work of the devil, and *righteousness* sought for as the gift of God; and that He was sent to the world that through Him there might be release from all sin and sorrow, with the blessedness of the service and love of God. They learnt from Him, by all they saw and heard, that the welfare of man does not depend on what is without, riches and rank; and that the service of God is not in outward things, the observance of rules and ceremonies; but that men become right and good and happy by knowledge and faith, prayer and obedience. He invited all to come to Him, that, having faith in Him, they might at once be safe from all evil, and sure of all good. He was acknowledged to be the Son of God, because God was manifestly in Him, according to the statement which declared what was implied in all His words and actions, *He who has seen Me has seen the Father.*]

Outlines.

Jesus, Lord of dead and living.

“None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.”—Rom. xiv. 7-9.

I. All souls belong to Jesus Christ. “We are the Lord’s.” To assert this is to ascribe to Jesus one of the very highest attributes of Godhead. The Almighty is declared to be, not merely the God of this world—this material universe, but the God of *men*; not merely the God of men, but peculiarly, emphatically, the God of the souls of men. The soul is the grand mark of man. Put all the splendours of the visible creation into the scale; one soul will outweigh them all. “What know we greater than the soul?” All honours were empty, without this ascription,—the God of the souls of men. And so we read the address: “O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh!” (Num. xvi. 22.) And He says, “All souls are mine” (Ezek. xviii. 4).

Whence this claim? It is by right of creation. (Gen. ii. 7.) It is by right of constant upholding; “He restoreth our souls!” (Ps. civ. 29.) It is by right of fatherhood (Gen. i. 27); *the Father of spirits* (Heb. xii. 9).

We are conscious of this great truth. We know that we are in His hands, and He can do with us as He wills. He holds the key, we know, that unlocks the mysteries of our being. Our times, we know, are in His hands. We know that we can pray to Him, and that He can help us. We know that we can trust in Him. We know that we can love Him. If we are conscious of the existence of our own spirit, we are conscious of Him. Every exercise of spirit brings us into contact with Him. He holds us

by our right hand, and we cannot flee from His presence. Our souls are, and will be for ever,—His !

This property in souls is transferred to Jesus Christ. He speaks of souls being “given to him” by His Father (John xvii. 9–11). He is the Lord and Giver of life in souls (John v. 21–24). He can say, “*I am the Life,*” and “*I give eternal life !*” Jesus is therefore Lord of men in the highest sense,—Giver of their life, Master of their fate !

Consider Him, then, with whom you have to do ! How mighty a Saviour—how worthy of adoration ! How strong the ground of confidence for those who have fled for refuge to Him, who will suffer none of His sheep to be plucked from His hand, who is able to keep that which is committed unto Him against that day !

II. *His title to this property in souls.*

1. *His death.* “To this end he died.” He bought the souls of men with His own precious blood. The strong commercial terms used in Scripture, in speaking of the sacrifice of the Son of God on behalf of men, are surely designed to express the truth of the *inestimable value* of that sacrifice. Thus we have the expressions, “bought,” “redeemed,” “a price,” “a ransom,” “precious blood.”

The sacrifice of Christ was a life for a life. His Life for the life of every individual soul. “He gave Himself for me.” But *what* a Life, what a price ! How can men or angels speak of it ? How dear to men is the life of a truly good man ! how precious the drops of martyrs’ blood, shed upon the altar of liberty or truth ! What then shall we say of the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son ? Well might St. Peter say, “redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ.” What is there, in heaven or earth, it could not purchase ? It has purchased your souls. “We have redemption through his blood.” The Redeemer can say, with deeper meaning in the words, “All souls are mine.” All souls—this is a thought that should arrest the attention of the ungodly, as well as

pire the believer with hope and peace. "We must *all* stand before the judgment seat of Christ."

2. *His resurrection and ascension-life.* "And rose and lived." The resurrection of Jesus from the dead was a conquest; and He entered into the enjoyment of the fruits of conquest at His ascension.

His resurrection proclaimed His Divinity (Acts. ii. 24 ; 1 Cor. i. 4) ; His resurrection confirmed His teaching, the promise of life made unto them who should come to Him. It ratified what was done on Calvary (Rom. iv. 25 ; 1 Cor. xv. 14).

3. His ascension and exaltation He received universal power and rule ; and this was the reward of His suffering, and obedience unto death (Phil. ii. 9-11 ; Eph. i. 20).

By these titles, Jesus is Lord of dead and living. Dead saints are His—"with Christ, which is far better." Living saints belong not less truly to the "Saviour, whom not having seen, they love." The sainted dead dwell with Him ; and we, "dying live, living one day more," shall soon be with Him and with them.

Consider the thought—we all belong to Jesus Christ. A terrible thought, if we are rejecting Him (Heb. x. 29). A joyful thought, if we are living in Him. Then all ours—life and death, things present and things to come!

It follows that—

[I. *Both life and death have reference to Him.* In what sense is the statement of ver. 7 to be understood ? Of a man's own aim and purpose in life ? Not so ; for in this sense the selfish man, and the sinner, lives unto himself. His life begins and ends with self. Surely the meaning must be this—in the sum and result of his life, in the final judgment in the sight of God, no man lives unto himself. Every life, good or bad, will be found at last, in some way or other, to manifest the truth and righteousness of God.

Do not say, the wicked live and die in vain. In one

sense they may, but in another they cannot. The folly and misery of their ways commends the wisdom and blessedness of God's ways. The condemnation of the false is the commendation of the True and Eternal One.

But turn to the other side—to the issue of life in Christ. The result and fruit of our poor lives (oh, high and blessed thought!) will be glory to God through Christ. We are called, pardoned, sanctified, to this very end (Jas. i. 18; Eph. i. 6, 12, 14; Phil. i. 11). Let this thought be borne about with us, sweetening and ennobling the cares and trials of life (2 Cor. iv. 17). It carries with it an appeal to conscience. Are we working with God for this great end? (Phil. ii. 12.) Are we inscribing on our banner and our shield the motto, "To glorify God in our bodies and spirits which are his"? Happy we, if we can make these professions with any degree of sincerity. Such aspirations carry with them the pledge of their fulfilment. "Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."

We die unto the Lord. We glorify Him as to the time and manner of our departure. The love of life is strong; the weakness of the flesh is extreme; we are prone to say, "Not now," or "Not thus." We are anxious for the future—who is to do our work when we are gone? The head of a family—the philanthropist—the useful minister of Christ. Needless fears! When Moses dies, Joshua is raised up. And so it will ever be. Let us say, with placid resignation, "My times are in thy hand." We desire triumphant departures; but He seldom grants them. Christ foretold Simon Peter's painful and ignominious death, and in the same breath said, "Follow me!" What is the blessedness of the death of the righteous, and his last end? Its peacefulness—its unclouded calm? Not so, but this glorious truth, "He dies unto the Lord."

Forest Hill.

EDWIN JOHNSON, B.A.

Christ at a Wedding.

JOHN ii. 1-11.

THE above paragraph shows us several things respecting Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SOCIALITY OF HIS NATURE.

And both Jesus was called, and his disciples to the marriage." Christ was not a recluse. He associated freely with every class of people,—even with "publicans and sinners." (Read Luke xv. 2; read also Luke xix. 40.)

I. HIS ABSOLUTE POWER OVER NATURE.

Science has given man great power over nature: look at steam and electricity, etc. But Christ has only to speak to nature, yea, only to look at nature, and it at once obeys Him. He only looked at the water in the water-pots, and it became at once wine.

II. THAT HIS RESOURCES ARE EQUAL TO THE KINDNESS OF HIS HEART.

The kindness of man's heart is often greater than his resources. It was so at the wedding in Cana of Galilee: "They have no wine." The young couple undoubtedly were anxious to entertain all their friends, but their resources failed. Man's resources are very limited, the least extra draw will exhaust them. But Christ's resources are infinite; He has never a will without means. The mother of Jesus said of the married couple, "They have no wine;" but it will never be said of Christ that His resources are exhausted. (Read Col. i. 19; read also 1 Cor. xiii. 19.)

III. THAT HE EXPECTS MAN TO DO HIS DUTY.

Jesus saith unto them, "Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them to the brim." Christ could have filled those waterpots with wine, without filling them with water at all, if He liked; or He could have filled them with Himself if He wished, as easily as He turned the water into wine; but He commanded the servants to do what they could.

V. THAT IT WAS BY HIS WORKS THAT CHRIST MANIFESTED HIS REAL CHARACTER.

"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed in him." Actions speak louder than words. True, "never man spake like" Christ; but He refers men to His works rather than to His words for proof of His character. "Believe the works," He says. Noble principles always manifest themselves by works.

EDWARD JONES.

Under Repairs : a sketch of a Sea Sermon.

"Thou shalt be called the repairer of the breach."—ISA. lviii. 12.

IN the naval department of every government there is kept a correct list of ships. Some are for home service, others are on colonial and foreign stations, a portion of the fleet is laid up in ordinary, and some are under repairs. And we have sometimes thought that there may be tabulated, for the information of the younger sons of light, a correct list of worlds, with their names, position, history, and mission. And, in the absence of positive evidence to the contrary, we may reverently assume that our world occupies a lonely line, that it stands out in awful solitude, the only one which demands and receives the solicitude, study, and rapturous devotion of all ministering spirits, who are sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. And as they bend over us, and behold the reflection of so Divine a love, perhaps there is no sentiment more definite, more unique, more welcome to their hearts than that we are "under repairs."

I. Damage has been done.

1. To the Divine image in man. How battered, disfigured, degraded.*

* In illustration of this, we give part of an eloquent passage from RUSKIN'S *Modern Painters* :—"But behold now a sudden change from all former experience . . . evil diversity, a terrible stamp of various de-

2. To the relationships of man. To God: how altered. his brother: how alienated. The first-born a murderer, the second-born his bruised and bloody victim. the earth: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake."

I. Damaged man is under repairs.

These repairs go on by the authority, and under the personal inspection and superintendence of God.

- The method is His. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

- The materials are His. The life cries, the heart bleeds, the death pangs of the Ransomer, are they not His?

- The ministries are His. The angelic: "Are they *all* ministering spirits?" The human: called, qualified, placed in their lot, their steps ordered, who, by the mighty impulses of their mission, "beseech men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God."

- The memorial is His. A living, perfect, beatific monument of unmeasured, unrivalled, unending love. "Into him that loved us," etc.

III. These repairs must be accomplished in time. No repairs are done either in heaven or hell! "He that is just, let him be unjust still," etc.

Time is defined by the Son of God as "space to repent" (Rev. ii. 21).

1. How much time has been absolutely wasted.

2. How little really improved.

3. The remaining portion is little enough for the work.

H. T. MILLER.

South Bethel, Liverpool.

ation; features seamed with sickness, dimmed by sensuality, convulsed passion, pinched by poverty, shadowed by sorrow, blanched with remorse; eyes consumed with sloth, broken down by labour, tortured by disease, honoured in foul uses; intellects without power, hearts without hope, life earthly and devilish, our bones full of the sin of our youth . . . for us only if, after beholding this our natural face in a glass, we desire straightway to forget what manner of men we be."

Reviews.

A HISTORY OF THE FREE CHURCHES OF ENGLAND from A.D. 1688.—A.D. 1851. By HERBERT S. SKEATS. *Arthur Miall.*

Few works can be deemed more seasonable than the above. Not only is there at the present time a deep interest felt throughout the country on all Church questions, but, through the progress of events, attention has been specially directed to the adherents of the Free Churches. Public opinion has been growing rapidly towards religious equality. Many long cherished opinions respecting "Church and State" have been abandoned or greatly modified, and many Churchmen are now looking forward with great anxiety to the future. Fear however is often only the effect of ignorance. A better acquaintance with Dissenters and their feelings towards the Church will do much to allay their fears. Mr. Skeats's able and truthful history of the struggles of Dissenters will go far to show that whilst perfect religious equality is inevitable in the future, Dissenters are the best friends of the Church in seeking as they do to free it of what are only roots of bitterness and elements of weakness. Mr. Skeats in this volume has shown himself well qualified for being the historian of the Free Churches. He has correctly estimated the influence of the struggles of the Dissenters for religious equality on the character and history of our country:—"I think that England could never have been a country of which Englishmen of the present day could be proud, but for the existence and action of Dissent." This statement is borne out by the facts recorded in the history. It was through the influence of one or other of the sections of Dissent, that the Toleration Act was passed, the Test and Corporation Acts repealed, as well as the Catholic Emancipation effected. They were the pioneers of Missions, of Education in Day and Sunday-schools, and they were the first to call attention to the question of Slavery. In most of these departments of labour they were soon followed, and in some outstripped by the zeal of Churchmen. The country is indebted to the Methodist movement under Whitefield and the Wesleys, which forms an interesting

of Mr. Skeats's volume, for the rise of the evangelical which has done so much in the past to give vitality and to the Church. We regret that want of space prevents giving extracts from the volume, as illustrations of the author's lucid style as well as of the intrinsic merits of the work. The object the author sought to secure in writing it will, we trust, be greatly served, exciting and inducing "a disposition to study this subject as it should be studied by English public writers and English statesmen."

ALL AND IN ALL. By RALPH ROBINSON. *R. D. Nelson.*

is a volume full of quickening truth. Although published originally in 1660, it has more freshness and interest than most books of the kind published in the present day. It consists of a number of sermons on the various similitudes by which our Lord is described in Scripture, such as The Light, The Way, The Shepherd, The Vine, etc., etc. The sermons are short and suggestive. There is unity throughout; and most appropriate is the title *All and in All*, as Christ is the theme from first to last. Although Ralph Robinson has some of the pedantic blemishes common to most of the old divines, he is free from many of their faults, setting aside sins. He is seldom tedious, always full of emotional feeling, and manifests a marvellous fertility of imagination.

RITUALISM REVIEWED. By W. F. WILKINSON, M.A., Vicar of Derby.

is an able and masterly argument against Ritualism. Wilkinson shows conclusively that it is opposed both to the Bible and the Church standards.

PULPIT AT THE BAR. By Rev. JOHN PHILIP, Fordoun.

is an able exposition of the apostle's expression, "the duty of preaching." It is earnest, thoughtful, and instructive.

MENTAL HYMNS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP. Jackson, & Hodder.

This little book will be hailed with pleasure by all who take part in the service of song. It contains some of the best hymns in our language.

THE TREES OF OLD ENGLAND. By LEO H. GRINDON.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE AND DEATH. By JOHN BROOKES.
F. Pitman.

It is too often true that teachers of God's great book of revelation are ignorant of His other book, that of nature. The more, however, one is acquainted with the truths of nature, the better shall one be able to expound the word of God. The former of the above two books of Mr. Pitman's furnishes some refreshing thoughts to all who wish to converse with nature. It is written in a simple and interesting style, and although making no pretensions to a scientific character, the little volume contains much information of an original character on the trees of old England. The latter little book is scarcely so philosophical as its title would perhaps lead us to expect. It consists however of some interesting chapters on life and death, written in a free and colloquial style, without much appearance of unity or logical sequence. It contains many living and striking thoughts on life and death, of other writers as well as the author's own.

MISSIONARY LABOURS AND SCENES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.
By ROBERT MOFFAT. *J. Snow & Co.*

SAVAGE ISLAND. By Rev. T. POWELL, F.L.S. *J. Snow & Co.*

THE DAWN OF LIGHT. By MARY E. LESLIE. *J. Snow & Co.*

The above three books all relate to mission life. The first has been long known as one of the most interesting and instructive books ever written in connection with missions. It now appears in a cheap form. Those of our readers who have perused it in youth, and have not the book in their library, will consider a shilling well spent in procuring it for a second perusal, not to speak of having it for the purpose of reference. The second adds an interesting chapter to the history of missions in the South Seas. The third is a well written story of the Zenana mission by one who is intimately acquainted with female mission work. The words of Mr. Storrow, who prefaces the book with a short introduction, are well warranted: "Miss Leslie has had unusual opportunities for becoming acquainted with the character, habits, and wants of Hindu ladies, and in the following story has depicted these with great accuracy."

St. Paul's Episode on Love.

PART V.

The Permanence of Love.

Love never faileth : but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail ;
whether there be tongues," etc.—1 Cor. xiii. 8–12.

The last and crowning glory of love that the apostle mentions in this description is that it is imperishable : "Love never faileth." In this it contrasts especially with those gifts upon the possession of which the Corinthians had prided themselves—prophecy, tongues, and knowledge—which are all perishable.

In this passage we have—

I. *The permanence of love* : "love never faileth," it never ceaseth.

That love often fails in the sense of not accomplishing what it aims at is only too apparent ; love, after devoting herself unweariedly to the good of others, is often repaid with ingratitude and suspicion, and passes away from the earthly scene of her labours, wounded and sick, sore distressed and disappointed, without seeing the fruit of her long and persevering labour. This the *world* calls *ailing*," but it is not so esteemed in heaven. Though passing she would impart to others God returns to her.

The reference here of the apostle, however, is to her *not ceasing*. She is not content with a few violent surges of the heart, a few feverish fits of benevolence ; her life is an even flow of sustained and persevering effort.

Love is the first-born of the graces, and she will be the longest lived, or rather will live for ever. Love had no beginning, and will have no end. Love being of the nature of God, it is eternal like God Himself. That love which has wiped away so many of your bitter tears, which has alleviated the sorrows, lightened the hardships, and brightened the gloom and darkness of your lot here, shall be with you, not only till the end of your journey here, but will accompany your spirit to the other world, and be your companion there throughout all eternity. It came at first from heaven ; so that when we take it thither with us, we take it to its own native and congenial soil.

II. Contrasted with the permanence of love we have the perishableness of prophecy, tongues, and knowledge: "whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

1. *Prophecy shall cease.* It is a gift that belongs only to time. A period is coming "when they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know him from the least unto the greatest."

2. *Tongues shall cease.* The miraculous tongues in the early Church soon ceased. They were but means to an end. In this they are the type of the different tongues and languages that now prevail. They are necessary here as the means of holding intercourse with our fellow-men but not so will it be hereafter. On the threshold of that kingdom tongues shall vanish away. He who on earth could speak a score of different tongues will in heaven have no advantage over him who has but his native dialect. For there they speak not the language

the tongue, but the language of the sanctified heart, which is the same in every Christian, from whatever nation or kingdom he may come. Articulation by the tongue shall cease, as we shall there have the power of expressing ourselves in a higher language. Although the organ of speech lies mouldering in the grave, spirit will communicate with spirit, soul converse with soul. On earth even we sometimes hold converse without words. Thoughts are often read in the expression of the face, in the sparkle of the eye, in the curl of the lip, as clearly as if they had been expressed in words. Thoughts we sometimes find coming into the soul, too big for utterance in words. They wait swelling within us until they be expressed in the higher, the heavenly language, when these stammering inadequate tongues shall have ceased.

3. So with *knowledge, it shall vanish away*. Not that we shall forget what we have learned of truth, of God, and of heaven, but knowledge will be superseded. It will vanish away before the glory of the fuller, the perfect knowledge of the other world. The light of the noon and the stars, a friendly blessing to all who journey in the night, vanishes away before the glorious light of the morning sun. And so it is with the knowledge we have acquired here. It is but the starlight, or in the case of the most favoured the moonlight, which will vanish away before the perfect knowledge of heaven.

Much of the knowledge that we acquire here has to be modified, even in a few years. Imperfect conceptions vanish away before those of larger experience and fuller knowledge. The knowledge of the child gives way to the experience of the man. And so, when we reach heaven, the knowledge that we have acquired here will

vanish away before the perfect light and knowledge of that far-off land, of which the glory of the Lord is the light. "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."

In the twelfth verse the apostle adopts another figure to express the imperfection of knowledge, "we see through a glass darkly." If we understand this as having reference to looking through a window, the figure is not inappropriate when we bear in mind that windows, before the adoption of glass, were of transparent stone or similar imperfect substances. When seen through such a medium every object would appear obscure and fearfully distorted. The reference of the apostle however is here to seeing by the reflection of a mirror (as in Jas. i. 23). Ancient mirrors were made of polished stone or metal; and therefore, as the reflection would be more indistinct and distorted, the figure in the apostle's time would be even more striking than in our own.

(a) Through means of this mirror we see "darkly," that is, in a dark similitude, in a mystery. To a child and savage the seeing in a mirror is an enigma, mystery; he cannot understand it; he thinks that the thing which he sees is behind the mirror. And just in the same way the truths which are revealed to us in scripture are often mysterious, we cannot understand them: "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

(b) But besides being mysterious and dark, what we see in a mirror is also in many other ways *defective*. It is only a *reflection*, and as such dim and imperfect, sometimes even misleading. In the mirror the object is reversed, the right side becomes the left, and the left the right. If the mirror be not perfectly flat, the image reflected is distorted. And how often is it so with the medium through which religious truth is viewed! How often, like the reflection of the mirror, does the right side appear as the left, and the left as the right! The more important is made subordinate to the less: the weightier matters of the law—love, mercy, and truth—are left unenforced, and comparatively unheeded; while the trifling matters of ceremony, and form, and denominational peculiarities are brought prominently forward, and made to seem the all and in all.

(c) Another cause of imperfection in our knowledge is that it is *fragmentary*: “we know in part”; the truths of revelation are communicated to us only in part. Our intellects could not comprehend the whole truth, even were it revealed to us. We can take in but parts of the truth at once, and these parts to our limited powers seem sometimes at variance the one with the other. But this arises from our seeing only in part, and our being unable to unite the several parts into a complete and consistent whole. Losing sight of this truth, that our knowledge is fragmentary, is the cause of most of the bitterness of religious parties; each party think that they know and hold the truth in full. What is often considered as zeal for the truth is nothing more than narrowness and presumption, the mistaking a part of the truth for the whole. What is by some confounded with latitudinarian-

ism and indifference for the truth is often more truly a humble and reverent acknowledgment that all the truth is not with us, that our knowledge is fragmentary, that we know only in part. The more free and unrestrained intercourse Christians have with one another, the more interchange of feeling and opinion there be, the more shall they gather of the parts of truth that lie scattered over the wide world, that are to be found nestling in the minds and hearts of God's children everywhere.

III. A time is coming when our knowledge shall be no longer fragmentary; "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

1. "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face." Here there is evidently an allusion to Moses, who spake with God face to face (Num. xii. 6-8). Our knowledge in heaven shall not be by reflection, but shall be direct. It shall come through no imperfect medium. There shall be no misconceptions, no distortions. As Moses was privileged to speak with God "face to face," so shall we.

2. Our knowledge shall then be complete; "then shall I know even as I am known," or as is expressed in the 10th verse, "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part will be done away." We shall then know as we are known by God, thoroughly and minutely.

What a glorious prospect is here unfolded to the believer! When the weariness of study, the worry of care, the exhaustion of unceasing toil shall all be over, we shall know the deepest things without having to strain our eyes as through a dimming and distorting glass, but we shall see God, the Source of light and knowledge, face to

face. The mysteries that trouble the most learned, the subjects that baffle the acutest intellect, all that is unknown regarding God and God's dealing with us, all that perplexes us here, shall be clearly and fully known in heaven. And all having full knowledge, no longer knowing only in part, there will be but one mind as well as one heart. That uniformity of opinion which Christians so long for, but which is unattainable here through our knowing only in part, we shall witness in heaven, for all shall know God, and all connected with God, even as they are known by God.

Bromley, Kent.

D. L.

LIMITATION OF OUR KNOWLEDGE.—"There are two sorts of ignorance: we philosophize to escape ignorance, and the consummation of our philosophy is ignorance; we start from the one, we repose in the other; they are the goals from which, and to which, we tend; and the pursuit of knowledge is but a course between two ignorances as human life is itself only a wayfaring from grave to grave.

‘Τὴς βίος ;—’Εκ τύμβοιο θορων, ἐπὶ τυμβον ὁδεύω.’

**We never can emerge from ignorance. If as living creatures,
 ‘we are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep,’**

So as cognisant intelligences our dream of knowledge is a little light rounded with a darkness. One mortal, one nation or generation of mortals, may flare a flambeau, and another twinkle a taper; still the sphere of human enlightenment is at best a point, compared with the boundless universe of night surrounding it. Science is a drop; nescience is the ocean in which that drop is whelmed."—SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON. *Discussions*, page 634.

Misread Passages of Scripture.

BY THE REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

VI.

No Place of Repentance.

“He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”—HEB. xii. 17.

WE have shown in the last discourse that a close examination of the question of the birthright lightens some of the deeper shadows which lie upon it. Comparing the outward and visible aspect of the two men—the man who sold the birthright and lost the blessing, and the man who won them both—it would appear that the balance of worldly prosperity was altogether on Esau's side. Esau lost just that which his soul despised, and he won what his soul lusted after, wealth, power, and the position of a prince. He lived prosperously and splendidly, and died peacefully, we may believe, with few regrets. There is certainly nothing in the few words which are devoted to his subsequent history to suggest that he lived a disappointed, ruined man. On the contrary, he seems to have displayed on his meeting with Jacob that magnanimity and generosity which shallow natures are wont to manifest in a prosperous lot. It is just the glow of the sunlight reflected from their lives: the rippling shallows make a braver show in the sunlight than the still deep pools; and Esaus are gayer objects to look at, when all goes well with them, than the careworn halting pilgrim, who bears on his brow, and no sunlight can efface it, the marks of many toils and tears. But be that as it may, there can be no question that the Bible does not picture the life of Esau as a broken and ruined life, as far as this world is concerned. The man grew rich and powerful, so rich that he could afford to make light of Jacob's presents, so powerful that Jacob's company were helpless in

and. It is written that once the children of Israel for flesh, and "*God gave them flesh, but sent lean-into their souls.*" Something like this was the story of Esau, and of how many a worldly-hearted man fortune loads with gifts, while the springs of his life sink low and die. And his race prospered. As was to Esau, quite the weaker and more dependent the two, so when centuries passed was Israel to. The descendants of Esau had attained to such wealth and political influence that they were able to close the gates of their land against the elect host, pilgrims from the wilderness like their sire, angel-led, and sustained by hope. On the whole then, for himself and his descendants, his life must be pronounced a worldly success.

But Jacob, on the other hand, had to reap life-long the fruits of his craft and fraud. His life was a weary, long struggle with selfish craft and evil passion in which he was surrounded. He spent the best years of his life in exile, and stood before Pharaoh, in his own judgment prematurely aged and decayed. He won a name and a place which called him to submit to a searching discipline, to live the life of a pilgrim, to dwell as a stranger in his promised land, and to die in exile at last. The world was fuller to him of sorrows and toils than of pleasures, and the crown which the Prince of God at last was able to bind around his brow was set with many a trial. But he won the power to follow the Angel, the Angel which redeemed him from all evil; his life, halting as his step, was a noble spiritual progress from weakness to strength, from victory to victory, till he was ready to receive the prize of his conflict in a world from a hand which Esau "despised."

When looked at in the light of this world's interests then, all the darkest difficulties vanish as we read the story of this birthright lost and won. But then there is Jacob himself, the man who despised his birthright, who considered himself unworthy of the honour to which God

had ordained him, incapable of the glorious patience to which God had called him, and ca the prize which God had placed within reach of. The life of this man, from the higher point of v as sad, wretched, and faithless, as was the pilgrim from the lower. He won his wealth and his p by his energy of hand and will in all things that to this life; but he let all the interests and hop higher life fade out of his horizon, and the crow spiritual manhood slip from the grasp of his hand. He touched it, but he could not hold it good shall this birthright do to me, he moaned mess of pottage steamed before his hungry senses crown rolled in the dust. There is the man Es all his possession and princedom, in the sigh a very wretched and poverty-stricken outca kingdom whose citizens believe in truth, duty, effort, conflict, prayer, self-sacrifice, heaven, : About the case of Esau personally there are ma difficulties. His course seems to have been in marked out from his birth: "*The elder shall younger*" was said of the twin brethren while yet in the womb; and some such relation of seems to be involved in the destiny which a hi had from the first decreed. And this opens the an abyss of mystery, into the depths of which intellect can search—the relation of connate co and temperament to character, and the measure this bears on the supreme fact of man's being, bility. Responsibility, implying freedom in tl sense, we hold to be the corner stone of our d men. If man be not free, with the everlasting freedom within his reach as the prize of all his struggles; why! there is not a cur that prowls : streets whose lot is not more enviable. In that would be a combatant by a profound instinct of h struggling sternly life-long against innumera with nothing after all to struggle for; pressed,

by the weight of intolerable ills, with no hope to sanctify and no harvest to repay his pain. Who would not "rather be a dog and bay the moon," than such a creature? For freedom, and the responsibility which it brings, as the fundamental spiritual fact of our nature, we contend earnestly, yea vehemently, as for the only justification of God's constitution of the human world, the only key to the woes which He lets loose to afflict it and the discords with which He allows it to be torn. And for the reality of this moral freedom we shall have to do stern battle with the school who are urging now, with great subtilty and force, that all the moral phenomena of man's nature are just the finest efflorescence of the nerve matter of which his intelligence is manufactured, the cream of the milk of his natural law.

But it cannot be questioned for a moment that men appear to be under very various conditions of advantage, as we might call it, with regard to the exercise of their freedom and its fruits. The differences arise partly, but not we believe chiefly, from circumstance. The child of a household of thieves or vagrants, for instance, seems to have but a poor chance in life compared with the children who grow up, pure, cultivated, comely, and pious, in your serene, happy, and orderly homes. But the more serious source of this inequality is to be found in character and temperament, inbred lusts, passions, tempers, and proclivities which may make the life of a man one long agony of struggle and failure, while another man more fairly endowed may find from the first the way of wisdom a way of pleasantness and all her paths paths of peace. A man born with a brutal nature and feeble spiritual energy, or with a native propensity, as far as we can see, to certain forms of sin—the temptation to which exercises the kind of fascination over his will which the serpent's eye is said to exert over the victim bird, but which another man would burst through as easily as Samson flung off the withes of the Philistine harlot—is, one is tempted to think, at a terrible disadvantage in life's battle, compared with

the man who has a halo of saintly glory around his brow from his birth. It is a dark, sad mystery, much of which, after all our brooding over it, we must leave in trust with God.

I believe firmly that inequalities arising out of circumstances are after all far less real than they appear. The facilities and opportunities for a fair unfolding of life are not so uneven, in the various classes and callings, as they seem. There must be some deep meaning in the Saviour's words, "*Blessed are ye poor,*" and in the terrible sentence, "*How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God.*" There is an amount of practical Christianity—daily, hourly trust in God and ministry to each other—developed by the circumstances of the lot of the poor, which we may fairly set against the intelligent beliefs, the doctrinal correctness, and the measured charities of the richer class, as in the sight of God of equal or of higher price. There is nothing in a workman's lot or toil, to remove him farther from the gate of the kingdom than rich men, nobles, priests, or kings; nay, the balance is altogether in his favour. But, alas! there is a class far below the workman, a vast class, vastest in the great cities where Christian civilization is at the height of its splendour and power, whose lot it is terribly difficult to comprehend in a theodicy, and of whom it is hard to believe that they are not from the first at a fearful disadvantage as respects nearness to the gate of the kingdom of heaven. But the gravest side of the difficulty is not circumstantial; concerns nature and temperament. Though perhaps, we could search a little more deeply, we should see that each type of character has its own peculiar class difficulties and temptations; and that the most beautiful and saintlike have their dread perils of shipwreck, which make their course as arduous as that of the souls which bear about with them a great load of fleshliness and groan under the bondage of tyrannous passions and lusts. Still it is a truth which is not without its awf-

significance, that temperaments, passions, and powers are very variously distributed to men, while the burden of existence is laid equally upon all, and "every soul must bear its own burden" in time and in eternity.

These things lend infinite meaning to the word "Father" when uttered by Divine lips. Like as a father pitieth his children, the Father pitieth and beareth with us: "he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." It is a father's compassion, tenderness, and equity which we need, to be the basis of our confidence and hope. A father considers with fatherly care, interest, and love our individual endowments, difficulties, and temptations, in ruling and in judging us; and He will ordain our eternal state with a merciful wisdom, which has to satisfy not a rigid justice only but the hopes and yearnings of a paternal heart. If it were not for the belief that the bar of judgment before which we shall stand is a wise and righteous fatherly heart, the best endowed might well faint under the burden of existence, while the worst would moan under its agony and curse the day on which they saw the sun. There are some very terrible sentences in the word of God, which utter the moan, not of the worst men, but of the best and noblest with whose history it deals. "*After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day. And Job spake, and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived. Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it. Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it; let a cloud dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it. As for that night, let darkness seize upon it; let it not be joined unto the days of the year; let it not come into the number of the months. Lo, let that night be solitary, let no joyful voice come therein.*" (Job iii. 1-7.) "*Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul; Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures; Which rejoice exceedingly, and are*

glad when they can find the grave? Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in? For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters. For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came." (Job iii. 20-26.) "Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad. And let that man be as the cities which the Lord overthrew, and repented not: and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide. Because he slew me not from the womb; or that my mother might have been my grave, and her womb to be always great with me. Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?" (Jer. xx. 14-18.) These were not bad men, crushed under the burden of their own iniquity, but just, upright, and God-fearing men, who felt that existence was too terrible for them under conditions which hid from them the Father's ruling hand. And if they shrank from the burden of conscious responsibility being, how shall weaker men escape its terror, but by taking refuge under the shield of a Father's equity and love! But these thoughts lend a most blessed meaning to the words of the Saviour: "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son."

as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." (John v. 19-27.) "THE FATHER HATH COMMITTED ALL JUDGMENT UNTO THE SON." "BECAUSE HE IS THE SON OF MAN." Because He can take a man's measure as well as a Divine measure of a man's weaknesses, perils, and temptations; measure, as a man, man's need of mercy, and utter the Divine Father's judgment from pitiful human lips. Few of us, as we pore over these dark mysteries of existence, so full of consolation and hope as these words of the Father upon judgment. We can bear the darkness, we can bear the anguish, if we are called to pass through it, because we know that the ordering of our destinies is in the hand of One who mingles with a brother's sympathy and tenderness the Divine Father's equity and love.

But the text does not touch upon these difficulties of man's history. It treats him broadly as the typical sinner, the reprobate, the man who by his own base choice has cast himself out of the position for which he was born and trained; who by one decisive manifestation of his character and propensities has shut himself out from the high career which opened fairly before him, and who has no means of reversing the decree which excludes him, though he seeks it carefully with tears. It opens a very terrible vision of the inexorable rigour with which facts are done, facts when they are once fairly established, that stand upon our lives. But the words are often perverted to darker meanings—suggesting visions of unpardon-

able sins, of fruitless agonies of personal repentance with which souls under strong conviction no longer torment themselves, and with which the text has absolutely nothing whatever to do. A man seeking mercy of heart with an agony of tears, pleading for renewal to renew him, to restore him, and to cherish him in new life and hope, yet spurned from the arms of mercy, flung forth accursed from the arms of the picture which, blessed be God, has no origin but in the Divine word. No! thus runs the gospel *unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*" "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." "If ye have evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things unto them that ask him?" "Whoso cometh to me I will in no wise cast him out." "This man, that believeth on me, continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, and therefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

If any who reads these words has ever made them a stumbling-block, has ever suffered the devil to get a thought into his heart that he has sinned too deeply for repentance, and wandered too far for return—but he lies but lie moaning and weeping like Esau, and with anguished heart for repentance, to find himself rained back in anathemas, and his tears with the wrath of the Lamb,—let him sweep back the thought as an unholy thing to the devil who inspired it, and cling to the outstretched hand of Him who "will break the bruised reed, who will not quench the flax, but will bring forth judgment unto truth."

The text has literally nothing to do with personal repentance before God. No man can spiritually seek a place of repentance carefully with tears, and fail to find it, for the very act is an act of repentance. I do not care to discuss the question whether the repentance here spoken of is a change in the mind of Isaac, or of Esau himself. In either case the meaning is substantially the same. He found no means of reversing the decree, of winning the blessing of the firstborn, of inducing his father to recall the benediction which had been treacherously diverted to the younger, though he sought it carefully with tears. If it were possible that this text, in all its dreadful meaning, could bear on personal repentance for sin, and frighten men from it lest after all it should be hopeless, it would deny the fundamental ideas and promises of the gospel; nay, it would itself "*trample under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and do despite to the Spirit of grace.*"

No! the text is a very solemn and even terrible warning of the irrevocable character of deeds done in folly or frenzy; the inexorable character of the fate which takes possession of them when once they have gone forth from us, and which makes by them, it may be in spite of our tears and prayers and desperate struggles, a complete revolution in our lives.

Esau's history is but the repetition of the history of the fall. And it is a history which we all constantly repeat in the critical moments of our lives. Esau fell as Adam fell, and fundamentally for the same reason. Adam despised his birthright, and thought that there was a readier way to the satisfaction of the desires of his heart. Esau by one act changed, not his own history and destiny only, but the destiny of a great nation; Adam changed, by his one sin, the destiny of a great world. "*Wherefore,*" says the apostle, "*as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men.*" (Rom. v. 12.) Adam, like Esau, saw

through the eyes of Eve that the "*tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise.*" What good shall my birth-right do to me, he said practically when he saw the forbidden fruit, and he sold it; and that moment's work for him, for you, for me, for all the myriad human generations, can never be recalled in time or in eternity. There is something very much nobler here than in Esau's profaneness. It was not in a moment of sensual lust that our first father sold his own birthright and ours. The desire of wisdom, or what he took for wisdom, had much to do with the force of the temptation; but the essence of the matter is the same: Adam and Esau both chose, in the place of the good which God had provided for them, a good which they provided for themselves. Bitterly Adam, like Esau, repented of his folly, and sought to undo his work. When the wilderness lay cold and bare before him, and the flaming sword of the cherubim guarded the backward path to the bright abodes which he had lost for ever, he measured for the first time the full significance of his transgression. And when the sun set angry and lurid on the wilderness, and the moaning winds swept hoarsely over the waste, while a shudder shook the breast of nature as the tempest clouds gathered in the sullen sky, Adam caught the infection of the tremor, and watched with quivering eye the awful conflict of the forces which had broken loose from his allegiance, and which seemed to come thundering on as the doomsmen of the death which his Judge had decreed. Think you that then his heart did not cling to the memories of the splendours and serenities of Eden with passionate longing; think you that he did not prostrate himself in an agony of frenzied supplication that the barred portal might be unclosed again, that the fiery sword might be sheathed, that the flowers of Eden might again spring beneath his footsteps, while the balmy breezes whispered a blessing as they played around the field of his labour and his bower of rest?

and what has been the long and bitter cry of man's history? O God, reverse the sentence, reopen the gates of paradise, revoke the curse, let the sunlight of heaven shine once more on a holy, peaceful, and happy world! This is the great burden of human literature in its deeper and more sacred utterances; it is the meaning of all the world's great poems, the refrain of all its mortal hymns. Recall the curse! let life again come pure, peaceful, and blessed! Men, nations, ages have agonized over the sentence; but they have found no means of repentance, no means to change the mind of the gods or their own condition as the subjects of it, though they have sought it carefully with tears. Esau has forfeited the rejected of the birthright; you and I are the rejected of Eden. Sinners we are by nature and proclivity, with a sinner's burdens, a sinner's experience, and a sinner's doom. And there is no way to change the sentence, to rid us of the burden, to cancel the sentence, to blot out the anguish of a life on which the devil has stamped the shameful brand; no way to force the barred gates of paradise, even by the banded energies of a racked, sin-tormented world.

And I suppose that the private experience of most men furnishes the key to this. Who has not known something of the agony with which one dark deed of passion, lust, falsehood, knavery, baseness, can torture a human heart? Look back. Is there nothing in the past rising up at this moment in the full menace of its hateful presence, clear as the ghost of Banquo before his murderer's seat, which you would give your wealth, nay, some of you would give worlds if they had them, to undo; if conscience might but recover its serenity, and life its brightness; if the leprous flesh of their experience might again become, like Naaman's, fair, pure, and sweet like the flesh of a little child. It is not every Gehazi whose leprosy comes out in his flesh, and makes him loathsome to his fellows. How many Gehazis move about among us, carrying their leprosy within, but none the less plague.

stricken and perilous ! Happy those who have no dark chambers in their being, haunted by the skeletons of their dead lusts, sins, or crimes—skeletons which never fail to come forth at their banquets to scare them, choosing ruthlessly the hours of their festivity and triumph to murder all their joys. There may be some readers of these words who know this in all its horror, in whom the anguish of the irrevocable and irreparable has killed all the joy of life—a word spoken, a passion indulged, a deed done, which in one brief moment has drawn a brooding shadow over the once sunlit landscape of their lives. And you have wept and prayed, lying prostrate on the cold ground, beseeching the merciful God that He would blot out the record from your memory and from the lives which it has embittered and cursed ; but “the heaven has been as brass, the earth beneath has been as iron.” The word “irrevocable” has forced its meaning upon you in all its terrible sternness, and you have needed no commentary to expound, or preacher to drive home the meaning of the sentence, “*Beware lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected : for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*”

And if there may be some readers who know this experience in all its horror, there are a multitude who know it in its more modified forms, and who find it terrible enough even then. Who has not had forced upon him the misery of regrets or remorse, the causes of which remain unalterable, fixed as the stars in their orbits, and the fruits of which leave deep traces on the experience and the destiny through time, yes, and through eternity ? Did David, think you, ever look coldly or carelessly on his bold soldier’s bloody grave ? Was there no sad shadow, to his eye, around the beauty of Bathsheba’s child, which no murmured “Jedidiah” could chase away ? Was his home ever free from the shadow, from the hour when Nathan’s

the man "drove conviction home, and wrung the most bitter cry of a sinner's anguish which record in the literature of our world? Few the book of history are more terrible than the which entered David's home, the discord which kingdom, the anguish which pierced his heart, pour of his great transgression. A sad, care-worn man, he finished his course and went down re. Compare the David of 1 Kings i., ii., with the shepherd in his early prime, if you would see the havoc which one great sin may make in a man. Ah! in a measure we all know it, in some form of words, deeds, outbursts of passion, which have rent hearts with anguish, sundered precious bonds, we sullied reputation, clouded prospects, withered or blighted the promise of lives which we were to cherish, or of our own. And we would give our lives to blot out their record, and to repair the evil which has been wrought; but it remains engraven with a nail in the rock for ever: man cannot obliterate it, time will not.

To complete the subject, let me ask you to consider two

the dread seasons of crucial trial, on which the life, nay of eternity, is hanging, never come upon man.

It appears from the text that one morsel of meat was the question of the birthright; that one hard, hot chase settled the destinies of peoples for all time. It is one side of it, the outside. But the real issue of the question was made already; any trifle to disclose what has already established itself as a permanent character within. Esau had nursed his love for the birthright by a thousand daily lustings and scoldings; many a bitter scoff too he had flung at Jacob in his serious and meditative mood. Things like this will alone. The life of the chosen family is described in words of wonderful beauty and power in Heb.

xi. 8-14. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." This life Jacob believed in profoundly; this life Esau as profoundly despised. He despised it all, and made his contempt abundantly apparent. "And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah" (Gen. xxvi. 34, 5). This shows how thoroughly out of sympathy with the spirit of the chosen race he was from the first, and remained through life. All his sympathies and associations were with the pagans around him. Jacob was the true heir of the promise, for he believed in it; Esau its outcast, for he despised it, and had despised it from the first. His every act had expressed his contempt of it, and the sale of the birthright for a mess of pottage but complete the witness that he was a profane person, a pagan at heart. These moments mark the crises for which a long train of thought and habit has prepared. Many a secret sin, born of luxury and nursed by royal power and splendour, broke out into the daylight when David looked upon Bathsheba, and filled his life with unutterable sorrow and

shame. God takes no man in a hasty moment and brands him reprobate. A thousand daily touches through long years have shaped the image which there reveals itself, and on which is moulded the everlasting destiny. The little sins of life are busily, hour by hour, creating the great sins. The small habits and actions, which we allow to pass unrebuked—they seem to be such trifles—soon pass away beyond the power of memory to recall; but they leave their ineffaceable trace on our constitution and character, and lay silently the train of some great outburst of lust, passion, or wickedness, like Esau's or David's. Then is written a record on our nature and destiny which one day we shall agonize to blot out; but the inexorable eye looks coldly down on the frenzied pleader, and the stony lips fashion themselves into a voiceless "Too late!" Meet sin, meet all the devil's seductions and enticements, sternly on the threshold, and the citadel remains for ever sure.

2. The irrevocable is not the irreparable, through the abounding mercy and grace of God.

Things cannot be obliterated or abolished. They remain, and their record remains, for ever. But, blessed be God, they may be transmuted, and wear Divine forms of beauty and joy. And this is what redemption means. Eden is closed for ever. To abolish the condition of man as a sinner, otherwise than by one grand sentence of doom which would abolish his existence as a creature, is beyond the power even of heaven. A sinner's lot you inherit, a sinner's experience you must know, a sinner's agony you must taste, a sinner's horror of darkness you must pass through—to the pit, if the birthright never again seems to you beautiful and glorious, a thing to be won by toil and tears and prayers; but if your soul pines in its rioting, if it sickens in its worldly wealth and splendour, if the question forces itself upon you as it never seems to have forced itself upon Esau, "*What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*" then the sinner's anguish, from which there is no

escape for any one of us, may be made by Christ's dear love the strait gate to the splendour, the glory, the bliss of heaven. And this is Redemption. Divine love, love that could die, love that *did* die, that its beloved ones might not die, is the solvent which transmutes all the shame and pain of sin to heavenly glory and bliss. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound ; that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Here is no reversal, no obliteration of the past, mark you ; the thing that was is and shall be ; no power in the universe can blot out its trace. The experience of a sinner is part of your being, and in its transmuted form must remain part of your being through eternity. These wounds and sores of sin, suffused by Christ's great love, become the lustrous pearls of heaven. Nothing in the past, I care not how dark or damning it may be, is irreparable by the love which "endured the cross and despised the shame," that it might win the right and the power to redeem. There is no sin whose stains may not be wept out at the Redeemer's feet. There is no life which may not win "She hath loved much, for she hath much forgiven" as its record, earnest of a rapture of eternal bliss. But dream not that the path can be an easy one, and that penitence can transmute the sorrow into joy by a word. You have done that whose issues could only be undone by the agony and bloody sweat of Gethsemane, the cross and passion of Calvary ; and you too must die, die to sin, that you may live to God. The flesh, which has despised your birthright, must be mortified, crucified, by grace. "I am crucified with Christ," you must learn to say ; you must know the fellowship of the sufferings of your Master, and taste the cup of which He drank the dregs, or the lost birthright is lost for ever, and the deed done on earth remains irreparable as well as irrecoverable through eternity.

Foreign Pulpit.

THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING.

BY M. LE PASTEUR E. DE PRESSENSÉ, PH. D.

(TRANSLATED BY REV. R. S. ASHTON, B.A.)

CHAPTER IV.

Suffering in relation to the Christian Life.

God chastens us for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness.—HEB. xii. 10.

Forgiveness of world suffering cannot be a curse, it must be a part of the plan of redemption, and contribute to the realization; such was the predominant idea of our discourse. We attempted to show that the suffering which the unconverted man is called to endure becomes by the hand of God an irresistible goad urging him toward the cross; we brought before you the sweet and noble Epistle, addressed to all who have sought comfort but to no purpose, "My son, be not weary of his correction."

We have now to consider the subject under another aspect.

With broken pride the sinner has gone weeping to the Redeemer's feet, and poured forth his heart; at the end of the blessed words, "Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee," he has risen. Here he is then arrived at the goal. May we not expect that henceforth he will be free from sorrow, and that unmingled happiness will be the natural pledge of his reconciliation? The poor sinner who looked with a penitent and loving heart to the Saviour received this promise, "To-day I will be with thee in paradise." Where is this paradise of pardoned sinners? In what part of the world have its ever-blooming trees been replanted? Where does

its cloudless sky always shine? Where is the asylum which death does not enter? It is not to be found; and we all know that the external conditions of existence have undergone no change for the Christian. Of this he has no right to complain; he was not taken by surprise. Jesus Christ did not leave him under any delusion: He declared that the servant would not meet with better treatment than the Master; He said to His disciples, "You will have trouble and anguish in the world." If we look at the condition of His apostles, we find that according to the world's idea of things it was a very miserable one; shelterless, poor, and despised, they traversed the earth of which they were regarded as the offscouring, only to meet with fresh sufferings wherever they went. Judging only by appearance, these men were to be pitied; if they were privileged, it was in the number and extent of their afflictions. But why go back eighteen centuries, in order to be convinced of this fact? I have seen my brother in the faith, him who is to share the incorruptible inheritance with me, earning a precarious subsistence by the sweat of his brow, and experiencing all the bitterness of poverty. I have seen the Christian mother weeping by the side of an empty cradle. I have seen God's family on earth incessantly smitten, sifted by affliction like wheat.

Do not be astonished at this: not one of us has yet reached the goal; for pardon is not the goal, but on the starting-point. The end is holiness, and such holiness! no less than that of God Himself. The way to it starts from the foot of the cross,—a narrow way, calling for humiliation and self-sacrifice. As we proceed, groans are intermingled with expressions of gratitude, and we are in constant need of being stimulated by affliction. Let us now inquire how it fulfils its important office on behalf of Christians. We know beforehand that it cannot but tend to the realization of the merciful design. If it was a source of blessing for the unconverted man, what will it not be for

has become a partaker of grace? This assurance of God affords great comfort, but we must ascertain more precisely the nature of the blessing which the Christian gains through suffering. It must be very considerable, since St. James went so far as to say that we must count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations.* I can only justify the use of such strange but noble language, my object will be attained.

In Divine revelation an admirable progress of thought is observable, rising gradually from the lower to the higher ages. This striking progress is observable in regard to each particular truth, as well as in regard to truth in general. Thus, the secret of affliction was not entirely revealed in the first ages of the world; it was made known to man little by little, and it is only by the precious light of the gospel that the path of the unfortunate has been fully illumined, and it is only since the proclamation of the New Testament that we have heard the last word of the sad drama. Three periods may be distinguished in what I call the moral history of suffering amongst the people of God. Each has brought out most clearly one important truth, which has not been set aside but rather completed by a higher truth, proceeding from a new revelation. Thus it will be deeply interesting to make a rapid examination of this moral history of suffering, taking care not to omit any of the successive lessons which God has given to His children in the course of His relations.

1. Suffering was presented to man, first of all, as a direct punishment of the sins he had committed. There could be no more efficacious way of awakening his conscience. God treated him like a child. In fact, during this first age of the world humanity was really in its moral infancy; it could not rise up to the world mind; it was necessary that that world should descend to it, and that every truth should become a matter of

* The French translation gives *afflictions*.

feeling and experience. Man found it difficult to look within; the inner book did not lie open before him; external objects alone could speak a language sufficiently plain for him to understand. Doubtless, he would not have grasped the truth, even in this palpable form, if there had not been a secret but real correspondence between it and his soul; yet he could not dispense with the practical teaching of the Divine dispensations. A long time before the first leaf of Scripture was written, revelation had begun in history; it was being written not in words but in facts, simple and striking facts. Thus in order to make the connection between sin and pain quite clear, God had established a striking correspondence between evil and suffering, between right action and prosperity. The man who acts righteously is the man who has most flocks, most riches, most happiness. The patriarch sees his servants' tents extending far across the plain. All that he does prospers; rivers of oil pour out from the rock; he multiplies his days as the sand; his roots spread out by the waters, and the dew lies all night on his branch; his righteousness is like a robe and a diadem, it shines amidst his outward prosperity (Job xxix.). On the other hand, the wicked travaileth with pain every day; a small number of years is reserved for the violent man; a dreadful sound is in his ears; in the midst of peace he thinks that the destroyer is coming upon him; trouble and anguish make him afraid, they assail him. Because he stretcheth out his hand against the Almighty, God runneth upon him and seizeth him in the thick bosses of his shield. He shall dwell in desolate cities, and in houses which no man inhabiteth and which are ready to become heaps. He does not become rich, and his substance does not increase and what he wished to complete will not be prolonged on earth. He perishes before his days are fulfilled; his branch does not become green (Job xv.). The first Psalm brings out with great distinctness this correspondence between righteousness and earthly happiness.

The history of the people of Israel was a magnificent illustration of Divine justice under the old economy. Every time they lapsed into idolatry they were immediately and severely chastised; and at length this noble people, planted by the running waters of the happy Judæan, was transplanted to the rivers of exile. Every return to God, every act of repentance, was at once rewarded; and we may assert in general terms that the old economy held the balance firm between right action and retributive justice, between sin and suffering. The farther back we go towards the first ages of the world, the more is Divine justice seen to be attended with this earthly and moral sanction. The farther we go from them, the more do we feel that a high end is to be subserved by suffering. Every time therefore that the man of God was smitten in those early days, he was led to think that he had committed some great sin; his suffering was a badge of deep humiliation, he clothed himself in sackcloth and ashes, he cast dust on his head and cried to God, because he felt that he was guilty as well as miserable. Later on, he had to learn that affliction does not confine its attacks to exceptional sinners, and that retributive justice does not fall only to the share of the righteous; but if the truth revealed to him was incomplete, it was nevertheless one of great importance.

But it was not possible that man should always remain content with the most elementary principles in regard to the explanation of suffering. Facts were daily occurring in apparent contradiction to this distributive justice, according to which piety and uprightness should always be rewarded with favour and the wicked man rigorously punished. Oftentimes it was not the just, but rather the wicked man, who appeared to prosper in all his ways: the former was insulted, despised, and poverty-stricken; the latter haughtily displayed his wealth. Long before Jesus Christ came, poor Lazarus had been noticed at the door of wicked Dives, without a rag to cover his sores. The first time that happiness was thus seen severed from

righteousness there was a profound shaking among pious souls, a terrible perplexity seized them, and their conscience trembled as if God Himself were about to fail them. It was then they exclaimed that the foundations were overthrown: "My feet were almost gone," said Asaph, "my steps had well-nigh slipped" (Ps. lxxiii. 2).

There is a book in Scripture which depicts in fiery colours this moral crisis, so full of inward peril and distress: I mean the book of Job, one of the most precious of books, because it gives us an insight into the awful struggles of a human heart, and because it sends up to heaven the deepest groans which earth ever heard before the sobs of Calvary were uttered. The book is moistened with the bitterest tears which a human creature can shed—those of a wounded conscience. What are the wounds of the heart, compared with those of the conscience? What pain can compare with that arising from the feeling, or rather the mistaken notion, of injustice in God? This is the feeling that constitutes all the pathos of the incomparable drama which transpires in the depths of a righteous man's heart, of the tragedy whose theatre is the lowest depths of an immortal soul. The question is not whether Job will be re-established in his prosperity, but whether he will find or lose his God, the just and holy God. It is the fear of not being able to believe any longer in His holiness, which darkens his soul with the shadow of death. If he roars like a wounded lion, if he curses the day of his birth, if he can discover no rest but in the dust of the tomb, if he declares that he would be delighted to come at length to the grave, if he asks the light why it shines on the wretched, and if he prays to God, all whose arrows have pierced him, to put an end to him, it is not because his flocks have fallen a prey to the Arab despoiler, or because his sons and daughters have been buried beneath the ruins of their house, which the desert wind has overthrown; it is not because he is eaten up by a frightful disease: no, it is because he doubts the justice of God. This is what so increases his tor-

ents, and brings him to utter despair. And if he doubts his God, it is because, together with the role of patriarchal humanity, he has all along believed that great misfortunes are inflicted here below : the punishment of great sins, and that exceptional disasters are signs of extraordinary crimes. From his earliest childhood he had been brought up with this notion, and his prosperity at the outset had tended to confirm it. And yet the most horrible calamities have come upon him one after another, without his having forsaken the good old ways. In vain he questions himself and examines his life ; he cannot discover the exceptional sin which, according to his notion, should justify such terrible disasters ; he would be almost glad to find one because it seems to him that he would at the same time find his God once more. He knows that he is a sinful man, he confesses it ; and perhaps, if the contradiction did not exasperate him, he would be ready to acknowledge in the guilt which he shares, in common with all the rest of men, a sufficient reason for his misfortune : but his friends are at his side, turning the knife out in the wound, wearying him with their sententious speeches and their cold reasonings, declaring one after another that Job must have committed some unheard-of sin, which he has hypocritically concealed, and by which alone the excessive character of his calamity can be explained. " Can the flag," they say to him, " grow without water ? will it not wither before any herb ? So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite's hope shall perish " (Job viii. 11, 13). It is the old notion of suffering, harshly thrust in the face of an afflicted man, who, with the exception of the general corruption of his life, knows that he is innocent.

Job feels that he is not a hypocrite ; his conscience bears him witness that he has been a faithful servant of the Lord, and that, looking at the matter as one of strict justice, the hand of God ought not to weigh so heavily on him. Hence a rising of indignation, a rebellion not of

the will but of the conscience, a conflict of feelings which excites a tempest within him. Hence his ardent defence of himself against the Almighty; hence the audacity with which as a frail being he relies on his consciousness of right, at least as he has understood it up to that time; and in a sense he sets God against God. We must not search in the book of Job for the development of a theory about suffering; we must not ask him for the logic which never allows the thread of an argument to snap in its cold hand. No; we have in these pages something more than a book, we have a soul pouring itself forth in burning words; we meet with thoughts and emotions which follow one another with inconceivable rapidity; prayer comes after an almost blasphemous speech; confidence in God and hope surmount the bitter floods of despair; love is mingled with indignation: but nevertheless the most striking feature of the book is the passionate interrogation which Job addresses to heaven, "O Thou who knowest that I am not an impious man, canst Thou take delight in crushing me?" If the veil hiding from our view the invisible world had been removed for a moment, if Job could have known that he was the champion of the Divine cause, if he could have seen his calamity from the heights of heaven instead of looking at it from the level of earth and from amidst the ashes where he lay, resignation would have been an easy matter. What if, transported into the covenant of grace, he had learnt beforehand all that the people of God were afterwards to know respecting the end of affliction! But this veil was not to be raised, he was not to know the solution of the problem, and yet he was compelled to submit; he was obliged to be satisfied with seeing that he was a sinner, and that every sinner deserves the wrath of the Lord. In presence of the High and Holy One, he was compelled to ~~shout~~ and be silent, though he could not understand the matter. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" said the Lord from out of the whirlwind. "Declare, if thou hast understanding. Have the gates

of death been opened unto thee, or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth? Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it." Then Job, humbled, answered the Lord and said, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand on my mouth." Admirable ending of this inspired book, and this moral drama, the various movements (*péripéties*) of which are so affecting.

A noble lesson for all time! Although, as we shall see directly, we as Christians possess the full solution of the general problem of suffering, yet we frequently find ourselves in the position of Job, in regard to this or that particular affliction. There are sorrows so far-reaching, so universal; there are losses so absolute, and blows so terrible and inexplicable, that it seems for a time as if we were wrapped in thickest gloom, and as if the secret of the Lord had not been revealed. Why was this man stricken, and that man spared? Why was such and such a being, in whom so many hopes centre, or who had already realized so many pleasant expectations, why was he withdrawn? Why was that other person left, an useless encumbrance to earth? Why was that voice, which found an echo in so many hearts, suddenly silenced? Why have I been smitten? Why have I lost that which rendered my moral life beautiful and useful? Oftentimes the soul seems lost for a while in thoughts which overwhelm it, it loses its foothold, it tumbles about helplessly amid the deep waters of affliction. It seems as if all were over. Do not believe it. Remember Job; you cannot go to greater lengths of despair than he, and yet God had pity on him. There is much comfort for you in this example of indescribable suffering, exasperated to the highest degree, and yet pardoned and consoled. Cling to the memory of this blessed fact as to a cable of deliverance, a board or a plank amid the shipwreck. And then remember that

affliction forms part of God's plan, and that He also asks you to manifest ready and absolute confidence in Him.

3. Let us now ascend to the higher stages of revelation, to those solitary heights where henceforth the believer beholds the dawn of day, to the cross whither all things conspire to lead us. It is there that suffering utters its last word. First of all, in order to assure us that pain is not necessarily a proof of sin, it is enough that He who emphatically the Righteous One should have suffered. I know that He suffered for us, and that He bore our sins on the tree by submitting to their consequences; but it is none the less certain that He Himself remained free from all pollution, that evil found nothing in Him, and that the extreme anguish of His crucifixion was coincident with the highest manifestation of holiness. Already the prophecy of the Old Testament—that anticipation of the gospel—had depicted the ideal Servant of God, the redeeming Messiah, with suffering features; and thus the iron circle in which Job was shut up by his friends had been broken. The crucifixion of the Holy and the Just One taught the world that perfect holiness has no other asylum on earth than the accursed tree. But the Saviour's crucifixion is not simply the revelation of the highest truths; it is a redemption, the redemption of our transgressions, the cancelling of our debt through the sacrifice of Him who was emphatically the Righteous One. He who believes in Him is no longer exposed to be condemned by the justice to which no satisfaction has been offered; suffering in his case is essentially a means of grace, and it assumes the beautiful name of trial, thus summing up all its blessings. It strengthens Christian virtue by calling it into exercise; it reveals the depth of the soul; it glorifies the Divine Saviour by making known the power of His consolation; it gives to faith and love the most favourable opportunities of displaying their power; and, to use the words of our text, it makes us partakers of the Divine holiness. It is a burning furnace, which is never kindled but for the purifying of

and to rid it of all dross. To employ Vinet's illusion, it is in the hands of the Divine Sculptor the shapeless but beneficent chisel, which, from out of the block of still shapeless marble, will draw forth His own image, to live again in a creature that has for too long a while been degraded.

Sanctification is simply conversion continued and confirmed. If conversion consists, as we have said, in turning ourselves with heart and will, and with our whole strength, to the Divine Sufferer, sanctification will consist in uniting ourselves to Him on the cross in an increasingly intimate manner. It is a long and painful labour, which has to be incessantly recommenced; in our moral condition, which is so fluctuating and fickle, nothing can be accomplished suddenly and once for all; the action of to-day does not render the action of to-morrow unnecessary, the less so that union with the Saviour is continually assailed by the life of the world, by its numberless temptations, and by the spontaneous opposition of our heart. If therefore I were left to myself, I should soon be tired of those painful struggles, and should go back to the present world, assuredly bearing in my heart a maddening pang which the young man experienced when he refused the Master's call,—the world having made him incapable of loving the cross, and the cross of loving the world to which I should have sold myself,—a painful situation, into which we should all fall but for the help of

At all costs, we must be kept close to the redeeming and sanctifying cross: the afflictions which God permits are the means of attaching us to it in some measure.

Let us now very briefly consider how by means of these sufferings we are more and more planted with Christ in His passion. First of all, they wean us from inferior things. "The love of the world is enmity against God" (English translation, "The carnal mind is," etc.); this refers not to the evil worldly life, with its impure lusts, but also to the immoderate and idolatrous love of the creature.

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our losses you have seen nothing but Him, and if ever you have tasted that the Lord is precious it has been since the day when you were thus smitten. He came to you amid the ruins of your earthly happiness, and spoke with His penetrating voice; He put His hand on your heart, He offered you Divine consolation, and then you said, like John the Baptist, "Verily, I knew him not." Between Him and you there transpired something entirely new. You wept on His bosom, and the tears thus shed were sweet. You understood His work, and especially His love, better. His words assumed a deeper meaning for your mind. And now you know what you possess in Him, what treasures of strength and peace He was laying out for you; His Spirit, who comforted you in your weakness, has enkindled within you a holy and burning love which the waves of the sea could not extinguish; and it seems to you as if the Divine Spouse said to your soul, "I will lead thee into the wilderness, and speak to thee according to thy heart." This wilderness was affliction; and lo, beneath His look it blossomed as the rose. Such happiness is holy, for holiness dwells in Him, and He is now everything in your estimation.

5. Lastly, affliction is transformed by the Christian into a noble act of obedience, and an occasion of thoroughly accepting the will of God. In this way especially it makes us partakers of His holiness. Apart from obedience, there are no holy actions; and when we have placed before you that which is really the holy act, the one which saved you, we have transported you, not to the mountain where Jesus speaks to an immense multitude, or to the tomb of Lazarus where He performs an astounding miracle, but to the garden of Olives, where the Son of man is heard exclaiming with tears, as the bitter cup was put to His lips, "Father, not my will, but Thine be done." Not only is the acceptance of the Divine will in such conditions the holy act, but also the highest manifestation of love, its most real expression because it is the most costly; in short, it is the most

perfect realization of the union between man and God, *the* agreement of wills being the closest and most essential bond between free and personal beings. We have *not* hesitated therefore to say that it is the act of absolute obedience, accomplished by the second Adam, while enduring infinite suffering in Gethsemane and on Calvary, and thus destroying the rebellion of our first father. The more that from our heart we can say to God, "Let Thy will be done, and not ours," the more perfect will be our agreement with the glorious Head of redeemed humanity, and the more shall we partake of His holiness. Now I ask you when can this act of obedience be more really fulfilled than in the day of affliction? Is it not then that we are obliged to acknowledge that God's thoughts are not our thoughts, and that His will is often contrary to ours? Our natural desire is to be preserved and guaranteed from suffering; in presence of a great trial our flesh shudders, our heart is torn, we feel ourselves grappling with a terrible principle of contradiction. If at such a time we say from the depth of our heart, "Let Thy will be done on earth as in heaven," we utter an earnest word, we give an irrefutable proof of obedience, and we are united to our Saviour by the strongest of bonds. This is the most glorious triumph of grace over nature, the noblest victory of the old man over the new, the complete re-establishment of order within, for it is in fact the re-establishment of the sovereignty of God. We can do nothing more pleasing to Him, and nothing which will more advance His glory.

Looking at matters from this point of view, great deeds are not wrought on the stage of public life, in the world, and in the Church; they are wrought in the solitude of humiliation; they are not brilliant deeds, but rather silent, hidden deeds, which, performed beneath the eye of God, are accompanied with many tears and groans. Nothing can equal in worth the acceptance of a cruel, overwhelming dispensation, the offering of a heart crushed beneath the grip of suffering, the sacrifice of a

anded soul which has only just strength enough say, "Not what I will, but what Thou wilt!" When the day of painful obedience dawned, even though it dawned on the most terrible disaster, it was a day of peculiar grandeur and beauty; we were raised to the very summit of moral life, a rugged, thunder-blasted summit, like the Alpine peaks, but still piercing the clouds. Then, assimilated to the Divine Victim, we receive from His hands the bitter cup, the dregs of which we drank, and which, as presented by Him, is not a deadly cup; then it is that, after Him and through Him, and repeating without any reservation the word of submission, we are truly incorporated in the renewed humanity of which He is the type and representative. Afflicted Christians, when you pass through your Gethsemane, do not think solely of its desolation, but also of its Divine beauty since the Redeemer traversed it, and be sure that it is this gloomy garden of Olives which is nearest to the goal. It is there that the narrow gate is opened, through which the self-despoiled and the self-sacrificed pass, kings and priests unto the Lord, who have shed in the tears of affliction borne with patience an offering more holy than Aaron's. God chastises us for our profit, that He may make us partakers of His holiness. We have shown what Christian suffering should produce; we ought now to show you what it has in reality produced, and thus by its deeds prove its blessed and sanctifying power. Space fails me, and I therefore appeal to your recollections. The baptism of fire never descended upon the Church until after the baptism of tears. Great trials have always preceded great reformatations. This is true of religious society in general, and of every individual composing it. Is it not certain that, if you are worth anything as Christians, you owe it to the grace of God working through affliction? Your various stages of progress along the path of holiness are marked by crosses. Supposing you have been spared yourselves, you have at least been witnesses of your brethren's terrible trials, and

you have been able to observe what glorious harvests have followed tearful seed-times.

Have you not been filled with a feeling of holy respect, as you have met with some sorely tried Christian, who was able to suffer without a murmur and with holy gentleness? Have you not had the impression that his soul was being purified and transfigured? Something heavenly beamed on his pale features; you almost seemed conscious of the approach of God, and of the perfume of Christ's presence. The purified gold shone with a lustre unknown before; the burning coal had touched his lips, and you would have said that an offering of a sweet savour was being consumed on the altar. Such is trial, as God desires it to be. Do not be astonished therefore if you also are called to pass through a furnace, and you are overwhelmed with divers afflictions. "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Those effects will not be produced without your help. Suffering has no magical virtue. It is possible even to derive from it nothing but hatred and sin. Take heed therefore, that that which is lame be not turned out of the way, but rather let it be healed. Every affliction which does not lead to holiness and love is an evil thing.

Oh, beware! it is not your soul's well-being alone which is concerned, but also the glory of God; for if nothing brings Him so much honour as suffering borne with Christian meekness, nothing discredits Jesus Christ so much in the eyes of the world as the murmuring and rebellious spirit of one of His disciples in the day of affliction. You remember the strange scene with which the noble book of Job opens. Satan, the calumniator and adversary of God, presents himself before the throne, and insinuates that the piety of Job, who is the true type of the just man under the olden economy, is nothing but a selfish calculation. "Does Job fear thee for nought?" says he; "put forth thine hand now, and

touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." Thus in Job's affliction the Divine honour is at stake; and by the way in which he will endure it it will be seen if the Most High has mercenaries or disinterested worshippers as His servants, if He receives a servile or a loving homage. The same scene is still being transacted. I seem to see the unbelieving world presenting themselves before the throne where our Redeemer is seated, and saying ironically, "Do Thy disciples serve Thee for nought? Hast Thou not surrounded them with good things? Stretch out now Thine hand, and it will be seen if they love Thee for Thine own sake, or for the sake of Thy blessings." All this amounts to saying, "Stretch out now Thine hand, and it will be seen if Thou art worthy to inspire any heart with love." It is for you, Christians, to answer this question; it is for you, my afflicted brethren, to show whether you love Christ only in the day of prosperity, or whether, loving Him for His own sake, you bless Him even amidst privations and beneath the cross. In this suit instituted against God, you will witness against Him, if you are seen despairing and irritated, with bitterness in your heart and murmuring on your lips. Then men will mock at the gospel and its promises; the laugh of the great adversary will be heard, and the world will say that Jesus Christ can neither comfort, nor save, nor make Himself beloved. Believe such ironical accusations; show by your holy resignation, by your joy amidst tears, by your perfect submission, show that they have lied who have said that our beloved Saviour is necessitated to buy our hearts, and that His own attractions do not suffice. Strengthen yourselves with the thought that the glory of Christ is in your hands, and by the way in which you suffer compel the impious and frivolous world to stand astonished, and to acknowledge, in spite of itself and to the glory of the Redeemer, that the gospel is the power of God to save and to console.

The Gospel according to Mark.

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. J. H. GODWIN.

BOOK I.

Introduction, and Ministry in Galilee.

PART III.

Ministry in Galilee, to the close.

Div. I. *Herod and John.* (VI. 14-29.)

c. I. ¹⁴ And king Herod heard His name, for it became
d's eminent; and he said, John the Baptist is raised from
ion.

PART III. The second period of our Lord's ministry in Galilee extends from the return of the apostles, a little before the passover, to the departure for Jerusalem, at the last of the three chief festivals. In the former part the death of Christ has been mentioned, but only as the purpose of His enemies: in this part it is often declared to be the appointment of God. Before, His ministry was only to the Jews; now it is also to Gentiles, and He frequently leaves Galilee on account of the opposition of the Pharisees, as before He left Judæa.

Div. I. (Chap. vi. 14-29.) The imprisonment of John led to the removal of Jesus from Judæa to Galilee; the death of John was connected with another change in the locality of our Lord's ministry, and it is here related as an introduction to the further history of Jesus. As the one ministry was preparatory to the other, so was the one death predictive of the other. The mention of Herod's conjecture shows the impression produced by the miracles of Jesus, and leads to the following narrative respecting John. It does not appear that Herod was ever hostile to Jesus. The account given of his opinion concerning the miracles of Jesus, and of the motive which led to the execution of John, teach that he had no unfriendly purpose. The Pharisees are described as the enemies of Christ, and the Herodians (iii. 6), but not the king himself.

Sec. I. (Mark vi. 14-16; Matt. xiv. 1, 2; Luke ix. 7-9.) The fame of Jesus had increased much as He went about the country. Herod Antipas, the

lead, and therefore the Powers are acting in him. Now some said, He is Elijah; and others said, He is a prophet, as one of the prophets. ¹⁶ But Herod on hearing said, This is John whom I beheaded; he is raised from the dead.

For he, Herod, sending seized John and bound him in prison, on account of Herodias, the wife of Philip his brother-in-law. ^{Sec Death John.}

John of Galilee, heard many reports concerning Him; and of these he identified Jesus and John. The death of John took place soon after the return of his messengers, probably during the time of the apostles' mission (Matt. xi. 2; Luke vii. 18). The lament over Jesus, the walking through the cornfields, and the reference to the death of John, are associated by St. Matthew, who uses of each the same mission, at that time (xi. 25; xii. 1; xiv. 1). All these events occurred between the sending forth of the apostles and their return (xi. 1; xiv. 1).

The name of Jesus may be taken as the object of the verb, as in Matt. xiv. 1, the intervening words being parenthetical. Otherwise the object may be taken from the preceding statements; but no reference appears to the words of the apostles, nor is it likely that these would be the first heard by Herod recognised superhuman powers, but nothing Divine.

St. Luke says, one of the *ancient prophets*, belonging to this high class. The disjunctive particle is wanting in the best MSS.

St. Luke mentions the opinions of others and the perplexity of Herod. The state of mind would naturally precede the other. He also says that Herod sought to see Jesus.

As we learn many things after the people. Superstition is often allied to scepticism.

II. (Mark vi. 17-29; Matt. xiv. 3-12.) The narrative of the death of John given by St. Matthew is similar in details and position. St. Matthew notices the imprisonment of John in the account of his ministry, and briefly, but omits the narrative of his death. In this there is first an account of his imprisonment and its cause, with his protection from the hatred of Herodias; then of the festival, and the foolish promise of the king; and

brother; because he had married her. ¹⁸ For John said to Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have the wife of thy brother. ¹⁹ Now Herodias set herself against him, and wished to kill him, and could not. ²⁰ For Herod revered John, knowing him to be an upright and holy man; and he guarded him; and hearing him did many things, and heard him with pleasure.

²¹ And a festive day coming, when Herod in the celebrations of his birth gave a banquet to his nobles, and to the chief officers and the leaders of Galilee; ²² and her daughter coming in—that of Herodias—and dancing and delighting Herod and the guests; the king said to the maiden, Ask me whatever thou choosest, and I will give it thee. ²³ And he swore to her, Whatever thou shalt ask me, I will give it thee, to a half of my kingdom.

²⁴ Then she going out said to her mother, What shall I

lastly, of the consequence of the combined wickedness of these worthless people, in the death of one of the most honoured of the servants of God. Josephus states that John was put to death in Macherus, and that Herod had a magnificent palace there. (Ant. xviii. 5, 2; Bell. Jud. vii. 6, 2.)

¹⁷ Herodias was a granddaughter of the first Herod, and sister of Herod Agrippa; she had married one uncle, and was divorced to marry another, who divorced his wife for her sake. The name of her daughter was Salome. (Jos. Ant. xviii. 5, 4.)

²⁰ The different accounts given of Herod are quite consistent. Men are influenced by various motives, and the assertion of one is not a denial of others.

²¹ Galilee was only a part of the territory over which Herod ruled; but being the principal it is often put for the whole. If the guests were not merely from the one province, there is no reason for supposing that the banquet was in Tiberias. The description of the day as a *suitable one* must refer to the purpose of Herodias; but the mention here of her design would be improper, and that the dancing was planned with the expectation of a promise is improbable. The same expression, *a good time*, would be naturally used either for a *festive* or a *fit* season.

ask ? But she said, The head of John the Baptist.
²⁵ And going in directly with haste to the king, she asked saying, I choose that thou give me at once on a dish the head of John the Baptist. ²⁶ And though much vexed, the king was unwilling to reject her, on account of the oaths and the guests. ²⁷ And the king, directly sending an attendant, ordered his head to be brought in. ²⁸ He then going away beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head upon a dish, and gave it to the maiden ; and the maiden gave it to her mother. ²⁹ And his disciples hearing it, went and bore away his corpse ; and placed it in a tomb.

Div. II. *Second Voyage. Miracles.* (VI. 30-56.)

³⁰ And the apostles were gathered together unto Jesus, and they related to Him all things,—both what they did, and

Sec.
Retire-
ment
Galilee

Truth and right are to be chosen above liberty and life.
 Wicked men have some respect for those who are truly good.
 False honour may excuse and require much wrong.
 The greatest and best may for awhile be subject to the vilest.

Div. II. (Chap. vi. 30-56.) Jesus returned to Galilee, from a visit to Jerusalem (John v. 1), at the festival of Purim (March) ; and the apostles, returning from their several journeys, were again with Him before the pass-over (John vi. 4). The preceding narrative, respecting John, is introductory to the account of the second period of the ministry in Galilee. In this division, the voyage to the other side of the lake is related ; the giving food to the multitude there ; the return to the western shore ; Jesus walking on the water ; and the many cures which followed.

Sec. I. (Mark vi. 30-34 ; Matt. xiv. 13, 14 ; Luke ix. 10, 11 ; John vi. 1, 2.) The popular excitement occasioned by the death of John probably increased the multitudes who came together when Jesus reappeared in

what they taught. ³¹ And He said to them, Come yourselves apart to a solitary place, and rest a little. For those arriving and departing were many; and they had not opportunity even to take food. ³² And they went away to a solitary place in the boat, by themselves. ³³ And many saw them departing, and recognised Him. And by land, from all the towns they ran together there, and arrived before them, and came together unto Him. ³⁴ And Jesus going forth saw a great multitude, and had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things.

Galilee with the apostles. That they might have some leisure for rest and reflection, and be withdrawn from all political movements, He sailed with them to the eastern side; but the people, observing His departure, went round the northern shore, and came to the same place. The retirement from Galilee is connected with the return of the apostles, with the death of John, and with the renewed opposition of the Pharisees and Herodians (iii. 6; Matt. xii. 14).

³² St. Luke says they went to the district belonging to Bethsaida. There were two towns thus named: one on the western side, Bethsaida of Galilee (John i. 45; xii. 21; Mark vi. 45; Matt. xi. 21); and one on the eastern side, in Gaulonitis, distinguished as B. Julias (Jos. Ant. xviii. 2, 1; Luke ix. 10; Mark viii. 22).

³³ The mention of the *people* is wanting in all the old MSS., the ~~many~~ being the subject of both verbs. They who saw Him departing, and they who came from the neighbouring towns, should be distinguished.

³⁴ A similar statement respecting the compassion of Jesus, and the destitution of the people, is given by St. Matthew (ix. 36). St. Luke states that Jesus received the people, and healed many. The voyage may have been prolonged, to secure a rest on the water which could not be had on the land; and have been by night, as the previous voyage was, the landing being on the following morning. The people were met when Jesus came from the boat, as subsequently (ver. 54).

A time is appointed for service and society.

A time is given for rest and retirement.

And the time being now late, His disciples coming
 Him said, The place is solitary, and the time is now

SEC.
 Feeding
 of Five
 Thousa

. II. (Mark vi. 35-44; Matt. xiv. 15-21; Luke ix. 12-17; John vi.

For some hours Jesus was occupied in teaching and in healing; seeing the increasing multitude, He spoke to one of the disciples regarding the wants of the people. Later in the day the disciples asked Him to dismiss the people, that they might procure food; and were directed themselves to give food to all. By these conversations their faith was strengthened, and they were prepared for the new miracle, in which they were to take some part. A small store of provisions being brought forward, the attention of the multitude was excited by the order given to them; and in their arrangement preparation was made, that all might see and receive comfort. Then, in sight of all, Jesus gave thanks, and divided a few loaves and fishes among His apostles, that they might distribute to the multitude.

When all were satisfied, the remaining fragments were collected; more was found, after thousands had eaten, than there was at the beginning. This is the only miracle related by all the evangelists. Their accounts are different, but perfectly consistent. It is recorded by St. John of the following miracle, partly on account of its peculiar importance, and partly for the discourse in the synagogue at Capernaum to which it is introductory.

Before this Jesus had changed water into wine (John ii. 11), afterwards He fed a similar multitude (Mark viii. 1). Such miracles are rare; but they are like the other miracles of Jesus, and form a complement to His works of healing. He would not in distrust turn stones into bread, to remove His own hunger; but in compassion He increased provisions, that the wants of those who followed Him might be supplied. These instances are full of instruction; but the frequent repetition of such miracles would have been injurious, promoting indolence and imprudence and high expectations. In all the cases in which food was increased, the agency is certainly to a superhuman work of a kind not to be mistaken. These miracles have nothing of a mythical character, and have not much resemblance to the miracles of the O. T., Exod. xvi. 12, 1 Kings xvii. 10, 2 Kings iv. 4. This feeding of the multitude is referred to by Jesus Himself as a sign which was acknowledged, but perverted, by the people (John vi. 14) and which did not produce in the disciples all the faith which it should have done (Mark viii. 19). There is no fact in the gospel history more important than this. The miracle was an unquestionable proof of a Divine power, and in connection with all His teaching showed that Jesus was the Christ. But its mode is not declared. There may have been the introduction of new matter; or there may have been simply the acceleration, by

oread, and give th
How many loaves
they knew they said

³⁹ And He directed
panies and companies
sat down, parties at
⁴¹ And taking the five

new combinations, of the
been the collection and pre-
wards distributed, the min
of men (John i. 52). The
and in dispensing with me
and in the employment of n
some without (Matt. xxvi. 5:

⁴⁰ St. John states that the
sation with Philip, when the
replied to the question respec
had five barley loaves and to
What are these for so many!
the two apostles. From the
some interval.

⁴¹ The denarius was two-t
its value, being the paymen
The sum mentioned seems t
amount of money. The ques
they were to do this; but it
the want of "

ward to heaven, He blessed, and broke up the loaves, gave to His disciples, that they might distribute to them; and the two fishes He divided for all.

And all ate, and were satisfied. ⁴³ And they took twelve baskets full of the fragments, and from the tables. ⁴⁴ And they who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

⁴⁵ And He directly constrained His disciples to get into the boat, and to go before to the other side, unto SEC. I
Walking
on the
Lake.

the grace which Jesus said as master of the feast. The apostles did not give to each person, but to one in every row; and the provisions were increased as they passed on from one person to another, as well as when given by Jesus to the apostles.

St. John says that the apostles were directed to gather up the fragments, that nothing might be wasted.

St. Matthew adds the statement that besides the thousands of men there were women and children. The numbers are mentioned by all the evangelists, but in different parts of the narrative. The many differences in the version show that no one writer copied another.

The compassion and power of Christ were for the bodies and the minds of men.

The excitement of expectation prepares for the reception of good.

Material objects and human agency are employed in the communication of Divine gifts.

Order should be observed, gratitude expressed, and liberality be combined with frugality, in common meals.

SEC. III. (Mark vi. 45-52; Matt. xiv. 22, 23; John vi. 14-21.) The people, excited by the wonder they had witnessed, desired to make Jesus their king; and the disciples were in danger of yielding to their political projects. Therefore they were first sent away, and then the multitude was dismissed.

Bethsaida, while He sent away the multitude. ⁴⁶ And having dismissed them, He went away unto the mountain to pray.

⁴⁷ And when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and He alone on the land. ⁴⁸ And He saw them distressed in the voyage, for the wind was contrary to them.

And about the fourth watch of the night He went to them, walking upon the lake, and He would have gone by them. ⁴⁹ But they seeing Him walking upon the lake, thought there was a spirit, and cried out; ⁵⁰ for

Jesus went to the neighbouring mountain to pray, and remained there alone while the disciples were crossing the lake in a storm. He saw them, and toward the morning went to their help, walking on the water. They were at first terrified by His appearance; but His voice removed their fears, and receiving Him into the boat, they reached without any more difficulty or delay the opposite shore. St. Matthew relates also the conduct of Peter,—his request of his walking on the water, his sinking, and his preservation. The human will can, with parts of the body, oppose the force of gravity, raising things which would otherwise fall; and the will of Christ had the same power over the whole, without any violation of natural laws. The apostles were not properly mindful of their own weakness and of the authority of their Lord, and the lessons they needed were now taught them in the most impressive manner.

⁴⁵ St. John does not mention the dismissal of the disciples, but he states that the people declared Jesus to be the predicted prophet, and purposed to seize and make Him king. He names Capernaum as the place toward which the boat went, this town being beyond the Bethsaida on the western shore.

⁴⁷ The same term is applied to two periods, the second evening being sunset; the first is noticed before the feeding of the multitude (Matt. xiv. 15; Acts iii. 1).

⁴⁸ The Jews had adopted the Roman division of the night into four watches—the evening, the midnight, the cock-crowing, and the dawn (Matt. xiii. 35). St. John says they had gone 25 or 30 stadia, between three and four miles; Jesus did not need the boat, and would have walked on the water to the other side, if the disciples had not desired that He should be with them.

all saw Him and were terrified. And He directly spoke with them, and said to them, Have courage ; it is I ; be not afraid. ⁵¹ And He went up to them into the boat : and the wind ceased.

⁵² And they were much astonished beyond measure in themselves, and were amazed. For they did not consider the loaves : for their minds had become dull.

⁵³ And having crossed over, they came upon the land of Gennesaret, and were drawn ashore. ⁵⁴ And when

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Many
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nesar

⁵⁰ The statement of St. John, that the disciples were *willing* to receive Jesus into the boat, is in contrast to their previous dread of His approach.

⁵² The disciples had suffered from their partial sympathy with the people, and their opposition to the will of their Lord ; for reluctantly they had left the multitude, ver. 45. Having fallen from right views of His authority, they were the more subject to needless fear, and they were the more surprised by this new manifestation of His power.

Separation is sometimes required to prevent improper sympathy.

Difficulties are to be expected, and weakness experienced, in the Christian course.

Appearances awaken needless fear through inconsideration.

Christ speaks to encourage, and comfort, and give peace.

SEC. IV. (Mark vi. 53-56; Matt. xiv. 34-36.) After the extraordinary events by which the disciples had been so much affected, Jesus returned to the western side of the lake, and resumed the ordinary miracles which were suited to the common condition of men. Wherever He went there were many sick persons ; and He had sympathy for all, and succoured all. The general statements of St. Mark, and St. Matthew, refer to what preceded, and followed, the discourse in Capernaum on the sabbath day which is recorded by St. John.

⁵⁵ The district of Gennesaret, about Capernaum, is described by Josephus

they came out from the boat, some directly recognising Him, ⁵⁵ running about all that neighbourhood, began to bear about on mattresses those who were ill, where they heard that He was there. ⁵⁶ And wherever He went, into villages or towns or fields, they laid the sick in the broad ways, and besought Him, that they might touch only the fringe of His garment; and as many as touched Him were made well.

(Bell. Jud. iii. 10, 7); and it is mentioned in the Old Testament by the name Chinnereth, Num. xxxiv. 11; Josh. xix. 35. The boat seems to have drifted southward in the storm.

They who know Christ desire that others should receive blessings from Him.

His power and pity are such that all who come to Him are saved.

Outlines.

The First Object of Search.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."—MATT. vi. 33.

PRESENT outcry, much of the so-called higher learning impracticable, useless. Happily no such objection reasonably to be brought against the gospel. The text a fair specimen of Christ's abiding Spirit and unvarying mode. Three points more prominently brought out in it: I. Man's natural relation to the life of God; II. Man's proper relation to this life; and III. The blessedness of those who, ceasing from what they are, attain to what they should be.

I. Man's natural relation to the life of God. Text our warrant for describing this negatively. Man has it not.

says, Seek it. This evidently implies—(1) Man knows how and where to get it. (2) Man can retain only reach it, man can live it. (3) Text may even be made to mean that man once had it. How-
this be, the truth remains, he does not have it

Speaking thus, do not deny the existence in of much that is good and generous. Further, we are free to sympathise with man, in regard to the difficulties lying in the way of a proper adjustment of his

But still our present work is to point out the blindness, the error, the evil. So regarding the matter, the kinds of human life have been actually realized. Some have attempted to live above the world altogether. (2) Some give themselves up to the world fully. (3) Some try to live the double life, which to our two-fold constitution is evidently intended for. Thus far they are right: their mistake is, in the arrangement of details; in the order of superiority which they make selection. Common programme, First body, then the soul; First business, then religion; then ourselves, then God. Against rebuke in respect to these things, men are ready with arguments—body first; business legitimate, remissness in it not merely to lead to misfortune, but further in itself positively evil. When such arguments fail under the power of our convictions, promises of amendment are freely given.

II. Man's proper relation to the life of God. Text teaches that religion must have the chief place. Not to seek, it is "seek first." (1) First, in point of time; morning conditions the day; twisted sapling as of very necessity the gnarled and crooked tree. Hence so, youth best time for religious decision. And generally wisdom, for all of us, is religion first in the first in the week, first every day. (2) Religion must be first in point of effort. We give energy, and diligence to things according to their importance. Even so then, as eternity longer than time,

and the soul more precious than the body, in such proportion religion must be preferred to all other concerns that may engage us. (3) Religion must be first in the sense of being supreme. It is not a question of mere preference, but of rule. If we would be perfect, God in Christ must reign over our hearts and in our lives. This only is the life of God, the life which must be ours, in order to membership in the kingdom. Our true relation, accordingly, to this life must be striving after it, consenting to it, rejoicing in it.

III. The blessedness of those who, ceasing from what they are, attain to what they should be. "All other things shall be added unto you:" so runs the promise; but the words are often thrown back revilingly in the face of Christian people. It is denied that the word is made good in actual experience. Against this, some weak Christians try strained interpretations. They say that "all things" here are not all things in fullest sense of the word, but only so much as is needful. True meaning of this just that God gives Christian men and women such a spirit that they are able to dispense with material heritage altogether. It is cowardly thus to reason. Must take words in obvious sense. The plain meaning is, as we have it in the words of another scripture, that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of the life which is to come." Submitting these words to the test of practical experience, we see Christian men of advanced to positions of highest influence and honor more generally see them in easy comfortable circumstances. True, these results are accomplished by natural means; but still none the less is it under the blessing of God. Some true Christians are poor, and occasionally even distressed. What however if they are naturally weak? or if they have been foolish? or if, seeing that prosperity would have done them hurt, the will of God has been otherwise in their particular cases? These things have all to be taken into account as qualifying.

the fulfilment of this promise. Still the fulfilment is the rule; these others are the exceptions under it. Even though it were not so, and Christians could be proved of all men poor and miserable, still "better to endure affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." 'Tis but for a season, and all these things shall have passed away. Oh, be it ours evermore to seek that though we be poor in this world, we be rich in faith, and so heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him.

Blackburn.

J. M. STOTT, M.A.

The Question of an Awakened Sinner.

"And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—ACTS ix. 6.

THE man that uttered these words was a violent persecutor of the Church and people of God. Saul of Tarsus had conceived an intense hatred to the religion of Jesus, and he was determined to do all in his power to exterminate it. Not only in Jerusalem, within the precincts of his own country—for he was an Hebrew of the tribe of Benjamin—but in other parts of the world, he travelled to carry out his fell intent, his horrid purpose. He went to Damascus with letters of authority to persecute the saints of God in that city. Damascus was the capital of Syria, situated about fifty miles from the sea, from which it is separated by lofty mountains. Saul of Tarsus was arrested while on his way to this city. He heard a voice, and saw a light, a miraculous light above the brightness of the firmament. "And he, trembling and astonished," etc.

I. *This language is expressive of deep concern.* We sometimes wonder that men are not more concerned about what they must do to be saved. By nature they are blind and dark. (Isa. lix. 10.) A man may stand on the edge of a precipice, and be unconscious of his danger.

So with many sinners, though they are warned, they say, "we are not so bad as the preachers make us out to be." But weighed in the balances of Divine truth, they are found wanting; "the whole head is sick," etc. Remember the Pharisee and the publican. Saul felt his danger, etc. *Concern as to the manner of salvation.* "What wilt thou have me to do?" How shall I escape the damnation of hell? What means must I employ? A man lost in the Australian bush is not only concerned about the fact of being lost, but as to the way out of the trackless wilderness. The awakened sinner is anxious about the way of salvation.

"Say, sinner, hath a voice within
Oft spoken to thy heedless soul,
Urged thee to leave the ways of sin,
And yield thy heart to God's control?"

II. *It is the language of astonishment and terror.* "He trembling and astonished said," etc. We have seen men tremble under conviction. Let an awakened sinner think of his soul, its Divine origin and immortal existence, and he may well cry out, "Lord, save me." The value of the soul can never be estimated by the worth of worlds (Matt. x. 28; xvi. 26). Objection, "Nature is Divine in its origin; a blade of grass and a forest leaf claim God for their author." True, but the human soul is Divine in its origin in a far higher sense than a blade of grass. When God wanted to make a world, He spake, and it was done; but when God wanted to make a soul, there was a conference of Divine Persons, the Trinity held a council over it. Oh think of a soul lost, of the danger of the soul being lost, and be astonished. Cry with Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

III. *This is the language of decision.* Saul meant to do whatever God should tell him. Many persons profess to be seeking the Lord for years. Why is He not found of them? because it is painfully manifest that they are not decided. They ask questions concerning salvation

as they would ask the most trivial questions; there is a lack of earnestness. But the text is full of earnest decision, etc.

IV. *The gospel alone supplies a satisfactory answer to this question.* In the case of Saul, he was directed specially what to do and where to go. When a poor sinner asks "What must I do to be saved" go to the groves of the sages, and the oracles of the gods, and what do you find there in answer to the question? Go to the philosophers of ancient renown, to the men who belonged to the most splendid period of Athenian history, and what answer can you get from Socrates, Plato, or Pythagoras, to the all-important question "What must I do to be saved?" Go to modern infidels, and what can you learn from the teachers of modern scepticism to satisfy an awakened sinner? Go to nature, and the starry heavens declare God's power and wisdom, but not a word in answer to the question "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Go to the gospel, and the question is satisfactorily answered at once. Go to Jesus Christ, and His answer is ready—"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me," etc. Rely on His mediatorial work. The sinner may be guilty, and his crimes aggravated; but the very chief of sinners may be saved. The gospel chain of mercy fathoms the depths of moral depravity; it reaches to the very depths of the sinner's misery and woe. It went down as deep as Saul's case, and saved him—the dying malefactor, etc.

Conclusion—1. *Have we asked this question?* There are persons in this world who are anxious to know what others should do, and of dictating to them, but who never do much themselves.

2. *This is a matter of paramount importance.* We may be concerned about pleasure, wealth, health, and many other secular things; but there is nothing of such moment as our salvation.

Castlemaine, Victoria, Australia.

G. T. HALL.

Christ Alive a Subject of Debate.

ACTS XXV. 19. Read vers. 18, 19.

WE have in this chapter Paul's defence before Festus, and Festus's declaration of the charge against Paul before king Agrippa and his sister Bernice who came unto Cæsarea to congratulate Festus. The words of the text are a part of the charge against Paul.

Ver. 19, "But had certain questions against him of their own superstition" or religion. There are various questions, and as a rule the most trivial are frequently considered the most important, and *vice versa*. Therefore let us be most careful, and that at all times, to regard those which concern the Lord Jesus as of supreme importance.

"Of one Jesus, which was dead." Thus speaks this miserable Festus of Him to whom every knee shall bow. If despisers and mockers of any age or nation refuse to believe on Him, they shall see with wailing and lamentation who that One is.

"Whom Paul affirmed," or kept affirming to be (or was), "alive." Thus showing that the Crucified One had been as usual the burden of Paul's pleading. The insignificance of the whole affair in the eyes of Festus is manifested.

Jesus Christ, "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty, the first and the last, which was dead and is alive again," is the subject of discussion. We shall call your attention to the following statements, viz.—

I. Why was Jesus Christ of all persons the subject of so much observation and debate?

1. Because He claimed the very highest descent:—That He was the Son of God. That He was the promised Messiah. That He was the world's only Saviour. That He had all authority in heaven and on earth. That He was, and is to be, the Judge of all His intelligent and responsible creatures.

2. Because there were proofs embodied in His circumstances and character, which none could or can deny, that were equal to His claims and secured unparalled notableness to His name. He possessed unlimited authority and power, without the least display of pride, molestation, and tyranny. He exhibited perfect tenderness and kindness under the most uncharitable and cruel opposition. He murmured not when in the very lowest conditions of life. "As a Lamb," He maintained unsullied purity under all forms of temptation.

3. Because of the strange circumstances connected with His earthly history.

II. Why was there such emphasis laid upon the fact of His being "alive"?

If alive again, then the truthfulness of His character is confirmed. If alive again, then the whole of His teachings and sayings were and are truths of the most vital importance. If alive again, then the work that He came to do was accomplished—"It is finished." If alive again, then He was not wronged in that He suffered. He had power to lay down His life, and to take it up again; none could take His life from Him, He laid it down of Himself; "as a sheep he was led to the slaughter, he opened not his mouth." If alive again, then His cause must and will prosper. If alive again, then the salvation of man is sure. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.

Finally:—Each one of us by faith may confidently say—

"I know that my Redeemer lives;
What joy the blest assurance gives!" etc.

Neath.

DAVID SEBASTIAN JONES.

Reviews.

SERMONS PREACHED AT BRIGHTON. By the late REV. F. W. ROBERTSON. First, Second, and Third Series. NEW EDITION. *Smith, Elder & Co.*

No man within the last fifteen years has had greater influence upon the mode of presenting Divine truth than Frederick William Robertson. We are indebted to him for fresh light on one or two truths of theology, and also in some degree for the amount of liberty that is now allowed in the discussion of religious questions: difference of opinion may exist respecting Mr. Robertson's theological views; some Christians still regard them with fear; but there can be no difference of opinion respecting the living power of his discourses. Robertson gave an interest to expository preaching which it previously too much lacked. It would be out of place now to offer any remarks upon the series of discourses before us; the verdict of the public has long since been passed upon them. In a former number of *The Analyst* * the life and genius of the writer have been fully considered. We have great pleasure in now calling attention merely to the fact that this new and cheap edition brings these valuable discourses within the reach of all. He who has hitherto only had a perusal of them may now have them for occasional reference on his library shelf.

THE DIVINE TEACHER. Being the Recorded Sayings of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST during His Ministry on Earth. *Smith, Elder & Co.*

We cannot better describe the aim of this beautiful little book than in the words of the compiler: "It seems desirable that words which are so precious, and which must remain equally precious to all generations, should be gathered together into a complete whole, and presented in a convenient form for the use of those who value them." We read the Divine words of our Lord free from the artificial divisions which are so often a disturbing element in our authorized version; whilst the connection with the circumstances that gave rise to the sayings is judiciously indicated in smaller print.

* Vol. I., page 48.

St. Paul's Episode on Love.

PART VI.

The Superiority of Love to Faith and Hope.

“And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”—1 Cor. xiii. 13.

It has been often taken for granted that while love is imperishable, faith and hope cease with this life. The thought of the apostle here is the reverse of this. He mentions these three graces together, because of their resemblance to each other in permanence. In the eighth verse he notices the characteristic of love, that it “never faileth,” never ceaseth, and contrasts with it prophecies which fail, tongues which cease, knowledge which vanishes away. This suggests to him the two other gifts which, while differing from love in degree of importance, agree with it in permanence. “Now abide faith, hope, love.” One of Watts's hymns we read—

“This is the grace that lives and sings
When faith and hope shall cease;”

But there is no authority for this in Scripture. In heaven there will be occasion for both faith and hope. We shall have still occasion there for trusting in God's faithfulness; and there also we shall enjoy the pleasures of hope. We shall hope for fresh displays of God's goodness, fresh proofs of His wisdom and power. These three immortal graces we find the apostle often classing together: “Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love,

and patience of hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ ;” “Let ~~us~~ who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of *faith*, and *love*, and for an helmet the *hope* of salvation -”

It is scarcely possible to over-estimate the importance of faith: “Without faith it is impossible to please God ;” faith is the hand by which we lay hold of God’s blessings; we are done unto, according to our faith. With faith hope is closely allied. Like faith, hope is to us a daily necessity; without hope all energy would cease, thought and action would be paralysed. The “hope which maketh not ashamed” has animated the Christian in every age to the endurance of hardship and trial, persecution and death. Great however as faith and hope are, love is still greater. “The greatest of these is love.”

Love is the greatest because—

1. It is most like God. God loves; but He neither believes nor hopes, for all things are by His power and are known to His all-seeing eye, and what He desires He wills. Faith and hope come from God, but love is also *in* God. Through faith we may be workers together with God, and through hope we may be participators in the joys of heaven; but through love we become like God. “If we love one another God dwelleth in us ;” “God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth *in* God, and God in him.”

As examples of faith and hope we have the Old and New Testament saints; but the examples of love rise far above these. As examples of love we have God Himself and Jesus Christ. “I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute

e may be the children of your Father which is
" "Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear
and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us ;"
let us love one another, for love is of God, and
that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."

is greater than faith and hope, in being un-
time and object. Love, being of the nature of
ed from all eternity. Faith and hope had their
only when beings were created that could
d hope. Faith too has reference chiefly to
hope to the future ; but love has for its object
nt, and future. Love does not, like hope, die
g its object ; the recollection of an act of
nues long after, to gladden the heart and
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igs. Faith and hope minister chiefly to oneself ;
ways in view the benefit of others, it " seeketh
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is the greatest because it is the soul of true
Faith is the subordinate servant of love, or
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. of love) is dead. Though we have all faith,
not love, we are nothing. Faith is the
lays hold of God's blessings, but love is the
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can be indifferent to faith and hope : the
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er like body and mind. If one suffer, all suffer
We cannot cultivate one, to the neglect of the
One's spiritual condition cannot be healthy
three are exercised. The Christian lays hold

of unseen things through faith; through hope and anticipation drinks in the joys and delights of far off land; and through love he manifests the power of Christ. Wherever there is deep love there will be also strong faith. John, the most loving of the twelve disciples, was also the one most imbued with the spirit of faith. Whilst in his gospel we have read some of the most touching incidents in our Lord's history, we have in that gospel also the fullest and clearest illustrations of faith. And again, the apostle Paul, of all Scripture writers he is the most lucid exponent of faith, is also the most eloquent writer on love.

4. From love being the soul of religion, naturally follows another mark of its superiority to faith and that it is the true test of sincerity and genuineness of religion. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another." "But we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Religion, as it is professed, has often been a mere form without life, because faith has been considered greater than love.

At the judgment day love will be the test of a Christian's sincerity. The evidence that will then be required will not be respecting our opinions, but respecting our manifestations of love: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat," etc. (Matt. xxv. 34-46.)

Whilst we should constantly pray, Lord, increase our faith and brighten our hope, let both of these be made subservient to what is in God's sight greater than either. May they both minister to keep alive in us the intensity the fire of love in our hearts!

Bromley, Kent.

I

Misread Passages of Scripture.

BY THE REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A.

VII.

The Curse of the Ground.

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake."—GEN. iii. 17.

ARE these words part of a curse, or part of a blessing? Are they a sentence on man, the doom of his transgression, or the first stage of a process destined to issue in the redemption of the heir of promise from sorrow and for ever? Few phrases are more frequently on our lips than "the curse of labour." Men, women, ye children, overburdened and crushed by the stern necessity which is the necessity of their existence, easily catch the sentence, and submit to the necessity in the bitter mood with which a slave accepts his chastisement, or a criminal the sentence of doom. Few things are more firmly fixed in our minds than that the strain of life are God's curse on transgression, having merciful bearings and issues no doubt for man who lovingly submits to the discipline, but in themselves evil and hateful, born of sin, and a part of it.

I propose to examine this idea in the present discourse, and to endeavour to estimate this curse upon the ground of its bearings on man's development as a spiritual being, and his relations to his Redeemer, God. That toil, care, and pain spring out of the one great act of transgression which every life repeats is the plain and indisputable affirmation of the word of God. The dark tones of man's present life gloom against a background of radiant brightness and beauty; in the childhood of humanity, as in the life of every human child, Eden shines behind all the toil and sorrow of the world. There has been a grand cataclysm

in man and in nature. The structure of the world has been rent and contorted, and the fractures and contortions repeat themselves in life. "*Sin entered into the world, and death by sin ;*" "*God made man upright, but he sought out many inventions,*" are the sentences of a sound philosophy, estimating the facts of consciousness and history, as well as statements of the word of God. There has been a fall, a rupture, by the sinful guilty action of the freewill of the creature, of the pristine perfect relation between man and God and man and the world. Transgression, the sinful exercise of freedom, is the fundamental fact of man's present nature and life; and the sentence on the transgressor, the inevitable sentence, "*the soul that sinneth it shall die,*" lies at the root of all the bitter anguish of the world.

There are abundant signs of the action of terribly destructive and desolating forces in the physical structure of the world. The earth has been torn and convulsed as by the spasm of some great agony, and the signs of it lie thick around. Huge beds of rock, thousands of feet in thickness, have been cracked and shivered like potsherds; streams of molten metal have been injected into the fissures, and have surged through the rents and swept vast floods of burning lava over the smiling plains. There must have been times in the history of the development of this earth, fair and calm as it lies now under the sun, when its whole structure must have been shaken to the very centre; when there was dread peril lest, like some lost planet, it should be shattered into fragments and fill its orbit with a cloud of wreck. But, some sure hand has helped earth's travail, and has brought forth out of the chaos of struggle and storm an orderly, smiling, serene, and beautiful world. The signs of the past agony are there to those whose eye can pierce the surface; but a loving hand has clothed it all with a glow of beauty and a robe of grace. The regions where the convulsion was fiercest, where the scars are deepest, are the regions of glorious

tain beauty, whither pilgrims wend as to nature's
st sacred shrine. The rents and chasms, clothed with
most splendid forests, with streams leaping and
rushing through the emerald meadows to the hollows
below, breathe nothing but beauty, and stir all hearts
to joy and praise. The touch of the destroyer is every-
where masked by beauty; and out of the chaos of con-
fusion God has drawn forth, what never could have been
; for the chaos, the infinite variety, the grace, the
endurance, the glory of the world.

This mystery of order and beauty, of cosmos, which
reveals itself to us in nature, unveils itself too in man's
mortal world. Life, the life of the human, bears traces
everywhere of kindred dislocation. A great convulsion
inherent in man's nature, has torn it away from God and
from Eden, and scattered what, but for a redeeming
restoring hand, would have been blasted wrecks, about
the world. Toil, pain, care, anguish have chased the
unity and bliss of paradise from man's heart and from
his world. Earth is full of wailing, and life of misery.
Looking at its surface aspects, we are tempted to call
the life of man the abortion of freedom, and to cry with
Jeremiah, Why did it not perish before it saw
the sun? Look deeper. As in nature, so in man's life, a
great restoring hand has been working; the wastes of
desolation are already clothed with some tints of greenness;
flowers of rare beauty and splendour spring up on what
had made a dreary, blasted desert. The moral chaos,
reshaped by the hand of the Divine love, the love of God
the Redeemer, already puts on some dress of beauty;
it glows here and there with a nascent glory whose
attainment is beyond the stars. Some vision of a grand
glorious purpose of redemption unveils itself, as we
uncover the secrets of man's sad history. "*Where sin
abounded,*" we read in the book of life as well as in the
book of Scripture, "*grace did much more abound: That
where sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign,
through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our*

Lord." (Rom. v. 20, 21.) What we see accomplish helps us to realize the visions of the prophetic work. *"The wilderness and the solitary place, shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, & the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God."* *"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall fly away."* (Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, 5-10.) Sin, the sin of the first parent, which every child of Adam repeats, is the fundamental fact of man's being; no religion, no philosophy which makes light of it can lay firm hold of man's conscience and heart. But, blessed be God, grace is the crowning fact; and it is the crown which will remain conspicuous through eternity.

The sentence on sin then is a dread reality. *"The seed that sinneth it shall die"* remains as God's judgment record, which no art or effort of man can cancel. But in this first sentence on His sinful child God has wonderfully interwoven benediction and judgment, warning and promise, words of life and dooms of death. On the serpent the curse is decisive and final: *"And the Lord*

God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." (Gen. iii. 14.) But the sternness relaxes and the doom melts into a promise, when the Judge addresses Himself to man. The very curse on the serpent is pregnant with blessing to the woman and her seed; the Executor of the Lord's judgment on the tempter is the everlasting triumphant Redeemer of mankind. And throughout the sentence on our race blessing ranges in fellowship with judgment; and the sternest words, prophets of many ills and sorrows, are rich benedictions in disguise. And this "*cursed is the ground*" is amongst them. It sounds hard and stern, and prophesies a long and hard apprenticeship of toil and pain; but stern as it seems, it is part of the blessing and not of the cursing, of the benediction and not of the doom. It describes the first stage of the redemptive process of which the sentence on the serpent had spoken, and is the condition of man's elevation out of the estate of a sinful, suffering, degraded creature to the friendship, fellowship, and likeness of God. In order that we may appreciate this, and see the true meaning and bearing of the judgment, I shall ask you to consider with me—

I. The range of the sentence.

II. Its work.

I. The range of the sentence. It is the sentence, as far as it bears on man's present condition and experience, that I wish to consider,—the "men must work and women must weep" aspect of our life—excluding the deeper and more tremendous question of death and its issues. Not that any full consideration of the one is possible without reference to the other. The whole sentence hangs together; our life is of one texture, one warp runs through the whole piece; and every groan, every pain, every bead of sweat upon the brow, every shadow that glooms over the life, has its full interpretation in the fact

that "*sin has entered into the world, and death by sin;*" all pain is truly a beginning to die. But for our present purpose it is possible sufficiently to isolate the condition of man's life as the workman and the sufferer, and to consider how they bear, benignly or malignly, on his essential interests as a spiritual being and his education for the destiny which through grace sin has been instrumental to create rather than to destroy. The elements of the sentence which are closely connected with the cursing of the ground, which in fact are links of the same chain are three:—

Toil—pain—care.

1. Toil. This is fundamental. On this man's existence hangs; to pause here is to stop the pulse of life "*And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*" (Gen. iii. 17–19.) The life of man in Eden was as free from toil as the life of a bee among the limes. Toil is wearing, wasting work; work to which no inward impulse, but the pressure of a stern necessity, moves us to work which we must do, whether we love it or whether we hate it, whether it gently tasks us or strains and exhausts our wearied powers; work which compels us to put aside much that we would infinitely more gladly work at, which cuts us off from pleasant occupation, profitable to our intellectual and social life; work, in word, which puts a yoke upon us, a yoke which wears and galls; work which makes us moan, and curse the day that we were born to it, and fills us with wild, rebellious passion, which vents itself in railings, blaspheming the wisdom and goodness of the Creator and the

divine order and beauty of the world. This is the work which we sinners are born to ; work which urges us with bloody spur, and exacts a tribute of our life-blood as it drives us through the merciless round. This is toil. This is what the curse of the ground has done for us ; we eat our bread, not joyously, thankfully, as in Eden, but in the sweat of brow, brain, and heart. How bright the contrast of the Eden life ! *“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden ; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food ; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden ; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. . . . And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it.”* (Gen. ii. 8-10, 15.) Sweet, light labour, parent of yet sweeter rest. To dress and to keep the garden ! A garden planted by the hand of the Lord. The fairest, brightest garden of the creation ; dewy fragrance, radiant colour, splendid form ; all that imagination can dream of beauty and glory, bathing man's life in an atmosphere of ravishing, exquisite, inexhaustible joy. One act of transgression, and the garden vanished. Like a dream it faded ; and hard, stern realities, unlovely hues, ungraceful forms, unkindly elements, rose round Adam in its room. Instead of the garden where the touch of the Divine hand still lingered in forms and tones of bewildering beauty, a bare hard wilderness stretched everywhere around him, whence not a morsel of bread could be wrung but by the most strenuous labour ; where not a gleam of beauty, not a nestling nook of verdure, would smile on him, until he had created it by earnest, persistent, and wasting toil. *“Cursed is the ground.”*

2. Pain. Part of the sentence of toil is pain. *“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception ; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children ;*

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their mother's bosom; the paths of the wilderness wet with the tears of brave men and women wrestling with pain too sharp for endurance; tears wrung out from the glazing eye, when it settles for one painless moment into the fixed, cold stare of death!

3. Care. "*Dust thou art.*" Here lies the secret of care. I believe that these words suggest altogether the most bitter and miserable experience of mankind. Toil may be borne, pain may be borne; but who in his own strength can wrestle with and master care? Man's condition is that of the most dependent of beings, while the things which he needs for the satisfaction of his nature refuse to recognise the mastery of his hand. He comes into the world the most helpless of all the infants of creation. It is horrible to imagine what a human infant, in the hands of a careless or cruel parent, may be made to endure. And this condition of his infancy follows him through life: he is really an infant, a nursling, as dependent for the daily bread of body, mind, and spirit on supplies which he cannot command, as an infant at the mother's breast. So large is the range of his necessities, so infinite his wants, that he needs just the arm and the treasure of the Omnipotent to supply it. And the sentence "*dust thou art*" meets him everywhere. He feels it in the miserable infirmity of his arm; he reads it in the accidents of life and the decrees of fate. He knows that there are things needful to his happiness, needful to his very life, things which he would die rather than miss; and yet they mock the puny efforts of his arm, the feeble breath of his prayer. He sees them passing hopelessly beyond the limits of his horizon, and he must live on and drag on from day to day, a broken, wretched, beggared life. Who has not groaned in utter misery over his wretched helplessness in the hand of calamity, as though his life were the sport of a demon, and all his pleasant things but instruments of torture, with which some malignant spirit can torment his soul and desolate his life? He is in the presence of masses and forces in

the creation, which oppress and crush his spirit ; but there seems to him a maligner demon behind the veil of the creation, who delights to make sport of his weakness and burn in the sentence "*dust thou art*" upon the tablets of his heart. Toil, pain, care, these are the bitter ingredients of his experience ; these make up how much of the daily course and order of his life. Verily men may well imagine that a curse was meant here rather than a blessing, and dream that a devil, a malignant spirit, is nearer to them and more potent on their lives than God. So dread is the pressure, that in the absence of revelation, in the absence of the assurance "*Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, for he knoweth their frame, he remembereth that they are dust,*" devil worship becomes inevitably the religion of the pagan world.

Such is the range of the sentence. Now let us ask—

II. What is its work ? Is it malign or benignant ? Is it, in its very essence, a curse or a blessing to man ?

Our first notion on reading these words, "*Cursed is the ground for thy sake,*" is naturally that part of the curse on man has fallen on the ground. It is cursed "*for thy sake,*" by transition of the curse from thee. But the word bears a nobler meaning. "*For thy sake*" may as well, nay better, mean "*with a view to thy good.*" The root of the sentence would still be transgression. There had been no need of toil, care, and pain, had not sin entered into the world. But sin having entered, toil, care, and pain are ordained for the sake of man in the loftiest sense ; they are the most perfect ordinance which could be framed to bless him (or rather with a view to his full and perfect blessing, for they only begin what higher influence must complete), by the Almighty Father's wisdom, power, and love. I am very anxious that the full force of this statement should be understood. It is quite possible to take the following view of it :—Man having placed himself before God in the attitude of a sinner, justice demanded that he should be sentenced : to ~~ill~~.

care, pain, and death *are* the sentence, the expression of God's anger against the transgressor, making man the outcast of His love; that then, in pity, God took compassion on the outcast, and began a remedial work, which, while leaving him still for the present under the action of the sentence, sought to rescue him ultimately from its final doom. This would appear to me a very imperfect and partial statement of the truth. To me it seems as if the whole sentence were the expression of the tenderness which began to work in the Father's heart in the very moment of the transgression. The death which is the righteous doom, the inevitable fruit, of sin, is in the very moment of the sentence held in suspense as it were by the promise; and the toil, care, and pain which are expressed in the sentence are the very first steps of the remedial work. The sinner in the very moment of transgression is drawn to the bosom of God's mercy. Since the first promise was spoken, the death which was the sinner's doom can only be tasted in its bitterness by the man who treats the promise as a thing of nought. And all the hard and stern conditions of man's present lot, instead of being the doom of a judgment from which mercy is moved to rescue him, are themselves the motions of mercy by which the work of rescue is begun. This is the principle on which alone it appears to me that the text can be understood.

I do not propose to occupy your thoughts with any of what I might call the minor mercies of the sentence, and the minor ministries of toil, care, and pain to the true development of man. The sentence of toil at once began man's higher education. It brought him firmly and sternly, but not malignly, into contact with the laws which he had broken, and whose penalties he had defied. Not a morsel of bread could he win without again submitting to them; humbly, absolutely, utterly, he must become their servant if he would win the lightest blessing from their hand. But the blessing was there, it was clearly possible that he should win it. Hard and stern as

has been his toil, through all these ages it has nourished him. Nature, though stern, is the reverse of malignant; all her conditions are not penal, but disciplinary; the sentence placed him at the foot of the ladder, a vision of which Jacob once saw, whose highest rungs are lost in heaven. But instead of tracing this, I wish to dwell rather on the ministry of the sentence at once and directly to the unfolding of man's Divinest life. The more you look at it, the more clearly I think will it become apparent to you that it is through toil, and care, and pain alone that such a being as man can rise to the full height of his godlike stature, and grow into the likeness and the fellowship of God. Let me ask you then to consider these three points:—

1. Through toil, and care, and pain, man becomes a creator—not a servant, but a master workman, and springs, as compared with his condition in Eden, into a higher region of life.

2. Through toil, and care, and pain, he becomes acquainted with all the experience of a father; the deepest and noblest relationships unfold their significance, and unutterably enrich and exalt his life.

3. By toil, and care, and pain, he rises to the full and sympathetic knowledge of God his Redeemer, and enters into the holiest fellowship of the universe for ever.

1. The experience which grows out of the sentence constitutes him a creator, a master workman, and lifts him into a higher region of life.

Man in Eden was the loyal, loving servant of his Creator, no more. God "*placed him in the garden to dress and to keep it.*" Fair, sweet, genial work, like life in one of the soft bright islands of the Pacific. Every moment an exquisite sensation, every movement a pulse of joy. Well! there you have the whole of it. And I say boldly there is not enough of it. To dress and to keep even a paradise is poor, slight work for a being framed and endowed like man. It was inevitable that sooner or later he should get to the end of its interest

the lees of its joy. A strong, hardy, brave, cultivated Englishman soon gets to the end of the soft, sweet life of a Pacific island. It suits the islanders, who are mostly soft, morally and mentally,—the human jelly-fish, without muscle and fibre; but there is not enough of it for the cultivated and developed man. Toil, pain, and care set him in exile of Eden at once about higher work. He went forth with a great sorrow in his heart, and a great shadow over his life, into the hard stern wilderness. There he was not to *dress and to keep* a garden, but to make one, that is altogether higher and nobler work. A higher range of faculties was at once called into action. He had to create fruitful fields and homesteads, and to frame a new paradise in imagination which his strenuous toil, pain, and care were to realize in time. His creative work as a husbandman is symbolic of all his creation, his work as parent, thinker, artist, poet, and master of the world. In Eden everything was made for him, and ready to his hand; in the world he had to make, or in any rate to mould, everything, and to make his hand ready for an infinite variety of work. And what does constructive creative toil imply? It means that he had to discover, to think out, and to reproduce, by the most strain his faculties would bear, the thoughts of God. He had to study nature, and to master her methods; he had to discover the uses of his powers and the possibilities of his life. He rose at once sad and stricken, but grand through the gentleness which had made him so, to the fulness of a godlike stature; and what are sorrow and pain, and care, through life's brief day, if they lead man up to this excellent glory of his manhood, the power to think, to work, to create, in the track and after the method of God?

By toil, and pain, and care, man becomes acquainted with the experience of a father; the deepest and noblest relationships unfold to him their significance, and unparagonably enrich and exalt his life.

Trouvail is the symbolic pain. "*In sorrow shalt thou bring*

forth children ;” and in sorrow all the products of higher life are born. The question is very simple for a woman, when the cry of her first-born sounds in her ear, and its cheek nestles on her breast, how far it transcends the pain. She can only murmur—“Unbearably,” and clasp her nursling closer to her heart. How much the pain enters into and exalts the joy, we cannot tell? Ask the man, a man like poor Palissy, the blind bard who got £10 for a “Paradise Lost,” and his account stands with him. He can but answer, The pain is as mighty as has been its cost, is the joy and glory of life—perhaps because of its very cost. In a glorious country you must have the mountains and the vallies ; the depths measure the heights, you must divorce them ; the two make the beauty which we come from far to gaze upon, whose vision quickens life in its dull springs. And all the toil, and all the pain which our intimate, our dearest relations and fellows cost us, as husband, wife, parent, brother, friend, teacher, poet, prophet, will be found essentially connected with our highest, purest, and most enduring joys. Mothers shall be our witnesses. The pain is the typical pain, and care, and toil. How many careworn, toiling, but rejoicing mothers? Where are the springs of your sweetest pleasure, where lie the treasures which you would guard with life? The toils, and the pangs that grow out of our human relations in this sad, struggling, mortal world like this, call for a string to the finest tension passions, loves, and thoughts, energies, which Eden never could have developed. There was little that was noble in the temptation of Adam or Eve’s temptation in the garden ; in neither side does any nobleness appear. But in the wilderness there are men by myriads who would die for the woman they love from a pang or a reproach, at the cost light if they gave their lives. Oh ! my friends, take a large and noble measure of the breadth of feeling, faculty, which toil, and pain, and care

Remember that every filament of love and care which is united to a human being, though intensely sensitive, is before in a world like this inevitably doomed to much pain, is a tentacle of your spirit life which can be detached from it but by your own baseness, through which life, joy, rapture will flow into it in a world in which sin is beaten, crushed for ever, in a world where there can be no more tears and no more pain. No more.

Love, care, pain raise man to the full and sympathetic knowledge of God his Redeemer, and bring him into the holiest fellowship of the universe for ever.

Bring him. That is God's purpose; that is what He means by it: but God does not force him. The message must be mixed with faith in them that hear it; the Son of God, who died that the sentence might be a benediction instead of a doom. Some, when He spoke, did not, would not believe; and their bodies fell in the wilderness, and their bones whiten

with care, and pain. Does God know nothing of this? *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not: surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. Like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he hath opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison, and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? he is cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken."* (Isa. liii.

3-8.) Count it the highest ministry of the sentence that it enables you to understand that; count it the highest aim and glory of a man's life to enter into fellowship with that life of the Lord. Hold this to be the deepest, most solemn prayer which has ever been uttered by human lips: "*That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings; being conformed unto his death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.*" And grudge no pain, nay glory in every pain, which opens to you a fuller comprehension of the sorrows of the Man of sorrows upon earth, the joy and glory of the Lord of glory in eternity. Light the affliction which is but for a moment: its ministry is unspeakable blessing in this life; you will find it infinite blessing in eternity. Sons of God, wear with joy the marks of sonship! Brethren of Christ, tread with courage in the Brother's footsteps! Heirs of glory, pay gaily with songs the price by which your glory is to be won.

"*What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?*" "*These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*"

Foreign Pulpit.

THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING.

BY M. LE PASTEUR E. DE PRESSENSÉ, PH. D.

(TRANSLATED BY REV. R. S. ASHTON, B.A.)

CHAPTER V.

Suffering for the Truth's sake.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake ; for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad : for great is your reward in heaven : for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you."—MATT. v. 10-12.

We have considered the effect of suffering on the Christian life. We have seen it to be one of the most powerful means of making us partakers of the Divine nature, for nothing can equal a severe affliction in bringing and nailing us to the cross of Christ, where we must die to ourselves before we can live His life. We

know why we are called to suffer so much, and why we are so frequently sent. But, connected with our Christian calling, are other afflictions by which we fill up the holy sufferings of the Saviour. It was in a twofold capacity, as the august and perfect Representative of God and of love, that He suffered. He was, first of all, the great Martyr for truth, allowing all the hatred and contempt which it excites in a hostile world to be poured out on His head. In the second place, His loving heart assimilated all the sufferings of humanity, and His Father's pity felt them all. No one can be a perfect Christian without experiencing both these noble kinds of suffering, martyrdom and compassion. They are the completion and the crown of holiness. They have this peculiarity ; they do not come from without, as common accidents from which we cannot escape. No, they are

decidedly free and moral; we are at liberty to withdraw from them. We have only to put a seal on our lip to be silent about our convictions; the world will thank us with all smiles. If we will only close our hearts against passion, and be content with our own happiness, a chilling indifference will then be our shameful price. Suffering for truth and love's sake is therefore an eminently free act, with no passive element in it. These holy sufferings bring with them their own consolation, and are mingled with heavenly joy. I am now to try and convince you of this, with regard to this kind of suffering, that which results from a bold profession of the gospel, by expounding the noble words of the Master, "Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake."

I. The first lesson taught us by the text is, *that we cannot be servants of the truth and of righteousness*—in other words, we cannot be servants of Jesus—*without suffering*. This cannot fail to astonish us when we read the preceding declarations. This ending of the beatitudes looks like a paradox. How does it pass that men of broken heart, full of meekness and forbearance, can provoke the enmity of their fellow-men? If they were haughty rich men, against whom "the labourers who have reaped their fields, and who were kept back by fraud, crieth" (Jas. v. 4), if the haughty and proud men, full of their own merit and who contemptuously oppress the weak, we could understand the hatred of which they are the objects. But they are poor in spirit, and confess their nothingness before the sight of God. If they were self-satisfied Pharisees giving thanks to God because they are not as other men, we could understand that their arrogance would provoke irritation. But no, they mourn over themselves, they smite their breast like the publican in the parable, like the sinful woman in the Pharisee's house at Nazareth. If they were ambitious men, greedy of wealth and unjustly oppressing their brethren, and resort

stratagem and violence for the purpose of being able to domineer, we could understand their conduct producing strenuous resistance, and their unbounded tyranny begetting fierce rebellion. But no, they are meek men, ready to exercise forgiveness, and having no higher ambition than to be righteous. If they were hypocrites, laying snares in which to entangle their dupes, and practising falsehood and deceit, we could understand their being overwhelmed amid general indignation. But no, they are pure in heart, and have all the simplicity of a child.

How comes it to pass, therefore, that such men no sooner make their appearance than they are insulted, cursed, and persecuted? The fact is, there is an absolute contrariety between such as are poor in spirit and all that surround them. The world proceeds on directly opposite principles. Its delight is in haughty opulence and proud self-contentment, and here we have humility and self-renouncement. It admires and pursues a brilliant career, in which everything is joyous and in which the lust of the eyes can leisurely satisfy itself amid the splendours of luxury and amidst exciting fêtes; and here is repentance groaning amidst sackcloth and ashes, and confessing with tears in its eyes that there is none righteous, no not one. The world's faith is in the triumphant might which overcomes all obstacles and extends its conquests, sword in hand; and here is angelic gentleness, shrinking from wronging any, enduring outrage, but not returning it, offering the left cheek when the right has been smitten.

Lastly, the world cleaves to visible things, terrestrial realities; it does not wish to be spoken to about eternity and its terrible secrets: and here is the pure soul that sees God, and is earnestly seeking what is immortal and invisible. Can you imagine a more decided contrast?

In order to convince you that this is not an exaggerated view of the case, we would remind you of the circle amidst which the words of the Divine Preacher on the

mountain were spoken. To whom did He speak but to fanatical Jews, puffed up with pride, who spent their time in praising their own merits and honours, and who had nothing but contempt and hatred for all who did not coincide with their narrow views; who had but one kind of worship, that of their own greatness; and who dreamt of nothing but exercising vengeance on foreigners. Everything in them proclaimed,—“Blessed are such as deem themselves rich in virtue and righteousness; blessed are the strong and the victorious.” When the beatitudes echoed through the wide world, beyond the frontiers of the chosen people, did they find the hearts of men better prepared to receive them? Can you conceive of an ideal more opposed to the meek ideal of the gospel than that of the great city which, like the eagle, had nothing

“Qu’ un regard pour mesurer le monde,
Et des serres pour l’ embrasser ”—

[but a look to measure the world, and talons to grasp it] ? Was not Rome, as its symbolical name imports, the city of physical force? Was not its dream an ardent and insatiable ambition, that never cries, Enough? All it understood was conquest and enjoyment; humility and gentleness were in its view the lowest degree of abjectness. Picture to yourself the western Babylon, as it is represented in the Apocalypse, its garments dyed in the blood which it sheds in torrents, and holding out to the nations which it has brought under its iron yoke the cup of infamous pleasure. The first Christian who approaches the city will bring with him the echo of the beatitudes, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are they that mourn, blessed are the meek.” Clearly, it will be impossible to find revilings and cruelties enough with which to punish the foolish man, the madman, the Galilean. You have only seen the smiling picture of the Lake of Gennesaret, and of the grassy slopes where for a short space a crowd sits entranced at the feet of the Master. But if you will just measure the moral distance between

and His fickle audience, you will see that never was sadder than this idyll, and that the Divine Alliance of evangelical truth, though so serene in its own, is more consuming than fire. "I send you forth lambs amongst wolves," said the Master. The logical conclusion of the six beatitudes is indeed the seventh, which speaks of blood and death.

The situation has not changed. The contrast between natural heart and the ideal Christian is not less marked to-day than it was eighteen centuries ago. There is no less fondness for haughty virtue, triumphant power, worldliness. Let a true disciple of the sermon on the mount make his appearance, and he is one of the most convenient of accusers; his very presence is a condemnation of everything that is sought after, lauded, and shipped around him. His gentleness and humility make him odious, because by these qualities he differs so thoroughly from the generality of men. If he were headstrong and ambitious, he would be endured and even loved, because the world would love its own. Thus loving enkindles so much hatred as evangelical love. It hides itself and seeks to be hidden, whilst alongside of it the world sounds a trumpet to announce its good deeds. It passes on, with its eyes full of tears and its heart overflowing with Divine pity toward all sufferers, not asking for an inch of ground, oppressing no one, lifting up the broken reed and rekindling the smoking flax; it is not its own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, hopeth all things, beareth all things. What could be more harmless, and better adapted to awaken general benevolence and gratitude? Yet it cannot move a step without being insulted, cursed, and reproached. It is in the living condemnation of selfishness and pride, and the world must either destroy its own idols or else heap insults on it: the choice was made eighteen centuries ago. Further, if a man is raised up who fully realizes this holy ideal, a man who really shows what love is by laying down his life for his brethren, a man answering in every respect

to the first beatitudes, it will be impossible to reproach and persecute him enough. Such a Man appeared, and He called Himself "the Man of sorrows." Who ever possessed poverty of spirit like Him who, though rich, became poor, condescended to our low estate, and selected the very humblest rank amongst us? Who was ever humble like Jesus, who washed His disciples' feet? Who was ever meek and merciful like Him who, when grossly insulted, replied by bestowing blessings? Who ever fought the fight of righteousness and holiness as He did? Who ever saw God, and revealed Him in a manner so pure and perfect as the adorable Master who could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Who ever presented so marked a contrast to the world's ideal of human glory and material power as He who declared that He came not to rule, but to serve, who never accepted but one crown, the crown of thorns, and who never for a single day ceased to sacrifice Himself to this mission of redemption and consolation. Well, all this humility, all this purity, all this mercy ended in the cross. Can there be a more striking proof that ignominy and suffering may be expected at the close of a life devoted to righteousness and charity? It was not possible that the Son of Man should not suffer these things, not only because of the sacred oracles which predicted His death, but also, and especially, because of the natural antipathy existing between the world and God, between darkness and light.

Since the time when Jesus appeared on earth, and shed His blood here, the cause of God has been personified in Him. Humility, compassionate love, righteousness, and purity have now nothing vague and abstract about them; these Divine virtues are connected with His person. Hence He boldly affirmed that suffering for righteousness' sake, suffering for His name's sake, is one and the same thing. The position of His disciples is thus rendered more difficult because they are called to reproduce the features of that perfection which, as exemplified in Jesus, roused in men such

degree of wrath. Their holiness is a continuation of the holiness which was crucified eighteen centuries ago, and which is destined to be so again from age to age, as long as the world remains the world and is based on the same principles. Further, Jesus was not satisfied with offering us an example; His holy life and His ignoble death constituted a redemption. The cross appears before us, proclaiming both our fall and our recovery. By teaching us at what fearful cost we have been saved, it reminds us that we cannot pay our own ransom. It proclaims our nothingness in view of the infinite character of Divine love. Thus, while humbling penitent sinners in the dust, it exasperates human pride, it is a stumbling-block to the Jews and folly to the Greeks; and the more so because, after striking a deadly blow at our false virtues, it preaches self-sacrifice, the death of the old man, in one word, crucifixion. Hence it happens that those who really follow it as their standard must expect all kinds of contempt, reproach, and persecution.

Besides, do not forget that you are not merely called to believe this folly of the cross, you must also proclaim it. You are witnesses for Christ; you must declare the Divine message in season and out of season; and if, in doing this, you make men feel its urgent character, you are sure to meet, first with disdain, then with hatred, and lastly with persecution.

I will go farther, and say that, leaving out of sight the testimony you must bear to the folly of the cross, if you are really hungering and thirsting after righteousness you will not shrink from reproach and suffering. Righteousness! it is not enough to worship it in secret, we must serve it without weariness, we must protest against iniquity—especially when it is triumphant, and espouse the cause of the weak and the oppressed. True, the Christian is a lamb that may be led to the slaughter, he will not open his mouth so long as his person only is affected; but he will raise his voice to defend his brethren's cause, the lamb will become a lion when contend-

... of religion, but to at
widow and the orphan—Al
Herod taking his brother's
ministers in the Southern
declared that it is impious to
a beast of burden, and more
abominable crime by quoting
what this simple declaration ex
degraded type of a base and
ready to bestow blessings on
successful tyranny! Away
worshipper of success! Noth
serving of greater contempt.
instrument of government, wh
the livery of a court valet. Let
the gospel; let us always and
let us know how to say to men
and influence, "It is not lawfu
and to rob the weak." Our ear
drowned by furious cries. No
will reply—that of man's consi
dignation an accommodating an
responding to a manly and ho
righteousness is the only Divine
Humble disciples of the meek

f, the more will you be made to resemble Him. Dis-
s of the crucified One, you will yourselves be
fied.

. It now remains for me to show, according to the
our's declaration, that *suffering is a source of happi-*

“Happy are ye when men shall persecute you,
shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my
,”

First of all, it is a *happiness to suffer for a noble cause*.
who sacrifices himself for an idea finds his reward in
sacrifice itself; it becomes dearer to him the more
as and privations it entails upon him. It is grand to
or one's country, said pagan antiquity long ago; it is
der still to sacrifice ourselves for it when, along with
native soil, we can defend the liberty and indepen-
e of our fellow-countrymen. Self-devotion yields the
est and most hallowed joy to the soul; carried to its
st limits, it produces a sublime exaltation of senti-
superior to the highest enjoyments. What then
the fruits of devotedness be, when it is displayed in
reatest and holiest of all causes—the cause both of
and of humanity,—which combines in itself every-
; that is noble, everything that is good for time and
ity, the salvation of the immortal soul, the con-
ion of all sufferings, the consecration of all rights,
guarantee of all liberties? Suffering and dying for
gospel is suffering and dying for the family, for
rland, for humanity, for righteousness, for truth,
I may add for God Himself, for Jesus Christ, since
Christ, as we have seen, personifies the cause of
eousness and goodness. And if it is a grand thing
ffer for a noble idea, it is still more precious to suffer
person. An idea is insensible to what we do for it;
rm and living heart is gladdened by our devoted-
as it would be grieved by our forsaking it. If we
the misfortune to deny Jesus Christ, we should meet
sad and penetrating look which pierced the heart of
son of Jonas as he stood in the high-priest's palace.

And Jesus has done for him, :
mystery of the cross, is eager to
holy Victim. He knows that he
debt of love. He feels nothing
insolvent debtor. No, he deligh
delights to be overwhelmed by
such a way as at least to show t
With what eagerness will he sei
giving some proof of his gratitu
the crucified One, what a privile
greater the suffering, the more rea
itself, and the more real is the hap
feels in its inmost recesses.

In the time of the great Roman
wife lay on the damp straw of a dun
not to come forth except to be a
the pangs of labour, she exclaimed
myself, to-morrow I shall suffer fo
smile lit up her pale features. It
"To-morrow I shall show Him he
knew also that she would not be
against the teeth of the wild bea
promises ; He would be there with
What happiness can equal that aug
will you be, said the Master, when
for then I will cover you with My s
in My love. You shall not take
to-morrow

triumph of our cause. It is a noble and powerful force in favour of truth that it is loved to such a degree. The pearl of great price shines with all its lustre in the eyes even of the most indifferent, when they see that we have sold all our possessions in order to possess it. Henceforth the value we attach to it is known; humiliations and sufferings thus serve as means of purifying and glorifying it. Again, truth is not evil until it is understood, and until, coming forth from the twilight in which we too often keep it, it rises in its terrible splendour. Christians, you are fortunate when you are insulted and persecuted, for this is the best proof that your testimony has been clear and decided, that the point of the sword has not been blunted. Your power is in proportion as you provoke hatred, for if the children of darkness cast you out in their rage the children of light, who are seeking it with a sincere heart, come to you, attracted by the strength of your convictions. It possesses a stern and mighty charm; it has received the seal of suffering; your words are no longer faltering and uncertain, they fly like a dart from a steady hand. It is felt that you are very sure regarding your position; your sufferings are the best guarantee of your certainty. Your wisdom, which is always mingled with doubts, does not look you in the face. It feels itself defeated and vanquished. The period of empty talk has been followed by that of a powerful and irresistible testimony; a prophet's and an apostle's word has resounded through the world, and great changes may be looked for. "Behold," said the Master, "for thus have they done to the prophets who were before you." In other words, you have added another link to the chain of heroic witnesses, and the word is no longer as a sounding cymbal; it is as the engraver's tool, with which God writes the law on the hearts of His people; it is also the word that brings light to the world. The more it is accompanied with suffering, the more does its creative power increase; it is this which

has rendered the preaching of the cross so efficacious. Vast suffering, vast power !

3. "Your reward is great in heaven," said the Master to His outraged and persecuted disciples, thus adding the consolations of a glorious hope to those which flow from duty performed. The present is grand, even under the cross, because it is sweet to suffer for Jesus Christ and with Jesus Christ. But beyond our earthly life there shines a clear light, amidst the brightness of which truth appears triumphant. It is not destined to be always rejected, despised, crucified. The cross leads to glory. *Per crucem ad lucem*, we read in the "Imitation of Jesus Christ;" and this victory of truth is already gained in heaven. When the bold confessor of Christ has breathed his last amid reproaches and tortures, he passes directly from the hands of his executioners into those of the holy angels, who bear him to the foot of the eternal throne. There he beholds the same truth which cost him so much ignominy and such cruel treatment triumphant and honoured, for the heavenly hosts prostrate themselves in presence of the Lamb that was slain, and the very name which was so maligned on earth angels with their harps seek to bless and to glorify. It is not even necessary that the confessor should wait to be translated to the invisible world, in order to take part in the victory of truth. Before the eye of faith the earthly veil passes away. The prophet of the Apocalypse ushers us into the heavenly Jerusalem, and enables us to witness scenes of glory such as imagination never conceived. The Church militant participates in the holy delights of the Church triumphant; it sees the felicity in which all its reproaches and sufferings end. Thus, even while it is being mutilated, smitten, thrown all quivering into the arena whose sand is saturated with the blood of its children, it hears the cries of the blessed drowning the savage shouts of the circus. To the voices which exclaim, "The Christian to the lions," responds the chorus of prophets, apostles, and seraphim repeating with Jesus, "Blessed are they who are

executed for righteousness' sake." Thus the men who scarcely deemed worthy of pity would not exchange their low condition for a throne. "Our bonds," we read in the "Acts of the Martyrs," "are the jewels of our holy coronation to Christ, and our crown blooms on the thorns which lacerate our brows. When the winter is past and the storm is over, the flowers will appear."

This triumph of truth in heaven is not enough. It must have its *glorious revenge on the very theatre of its humiliations and conflicts*. The world must see how mistaken it was in rejecting it, and one day it will be forced to exclaim, "O Galilean, Thou hast overcome!" Yes, this long drama of history must have its *dénoûment*. Everything that has exalted itself against God must be brought down into the dust. The mockers and wits who uttered their sarcasms respecting the folly of the gospel must acknowledge that it was their wisdom that was foolish. They must look on Him whom they have pierced; they must see Him mighty and victorious, rising and giving life to the dead. "Let him who hath this hope in himself purify himself even as He is pure." There is nothing in this to imply that the Christian cherishes any secret desire of vengeance; such unwholesome dreams must be banished from the implacable souls who imagine that the whole world is made for a few privileged people, and that the power of God is measured by their narrow views. No, what the Christian expects is the confirmation of all his hopes, the vindication of righteousness and truth. The last word of history must belong to God, otherwise God would not be God. In the gloomiest day let us banish fear; the triumph is certain, and let us say to ourselves, Everything is possible save the defeat of truth. We fight for a cause destined to triumph; let no base doubt ever trouble our minds. Let us cherish the joyous impulse of victory, and let us show that the Master spoke truly in proclaiming us happy when exposed to insults. Our text has received the most striking confirmation in history. Remember that beautiful and noble chapter

of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which the sacred writer brings before us God's witnesses under the olden economy, each with his wound or his reproach. "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Now this chapter might be continued indefinitely. From age to age recruits are added to this army of confessors. "Let us look through the Acts of the Apostles," said a noble Christian, "and what do we see there but bonds and imprisonments, stripes and stonings? The book seems written with the blood of the apostles." The history of the Church is written with the purest blood. This procession of martyrs through every age is truly our Theban legion. Here reality rises above legend; everything is simple and noble, without theatrical show. The woman, the child, the old man take their places beside the strong man, the ignorant person beside the illustrious teacher; and all together declare that they are happy in having to suffer for Jesus Christ. This happiness makes them all invincible, from the first disciples in the upper chamber at Jerusalem to the humblest Christian of the present day, who in some secluded corner of the world endures persecution for his Saviour's sake, even though it be only that thankless and inglorious persecution which yields no earthly compensation,—such persecution as may be met with amid a circle of friends, or in the very bosom of our family.

In conclusion, let me express a thought which lies deeply rooted in my soul. In the present day we need to open our Bibles at the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, not only to read it again, but to re-write it and to continue it. Nothing is more lacking in us than the holy suffering which is the result of a determined testimony on behalf of truth. And yet it is only at this cost that we shall be able to save the Church! The Church

It be saved. Who is there in our country who doubts it, except those who are destroying it? Now be sure of this, it will not be saved by administration, but through suffering. Its business is not to inquire what the authorities outside think about it, or what they mean to do. Their decision has not the weight of a straw in regard to destinies. The point of importance is to know what

Church itself thinks, and what it is determining to do. The point of importance is not the favour or the goodwill of the powerful of this world, but its own fidelity, its determination to do its duty, its whole duty. The hour of its deliverance will not strike on a palace clock, but in its own heart as soon as it has recovered the heroism of its noble days, as soon as its testimony has the precision, vigour, and the keenness of edge which cannot be resisted.

It is long since we heard among us a prophet's word, mean a word stamped with the seal of suffering, one whose holy and bold words which the world has never been able to endure. Our Churches resound with miserable quarrels, like the temple of Judaism in the days of its decline, when rabbis filled the places of the seers. Everything was altered when the man of the desert appeared, with his hand raised against every idol, and especially against a Greater than he, truth's noble Martyr, scathed by His burning words the hypocritical and mercenary religion of the Pharisees. Then the disputatious school succeeded by the Church born amid storms and beneath the cross. And the Church can only be saved in the way in which it was founded. This is why I proclaim beforehand that those among us will be blessed who are honoured to add fresh links to the chain of heroic confession, and who shall suffer for their Saviour. We have waited enough! the moment has come when we must act boldly.

The Gospel according to Mark.

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. J. H. GODWIN.

BOOK I.

Introduction, and Ministry in Galilee.

PART III.

Ministry in Galilee, to the close.

DIV. III. *Journey beyond Galilee.* (VII. 1—VIII. 10.)

¹ AND the Pharisees were gathered together unto Him, and some of the scribes; they having come from Jerusalem

DIV. III. (Chap. vii. 1—viii. 10.) As the preceding division begins the gathering together of the apostles unto Jesus, so does this with the assembling of His opponents; and in both there is the account of a departure from Galilee, followed by some remarkable miracles, and concluding return, when another multitude had been fed, from the eastern and western side of the lake. After the statement of the controversy which led to the departure, some account is given of the first journey in which the ministry of Jesus extended to the Gentiles, three events being recorded: the cure of the child of a heathen woman, of a dumb man in Decapolis, and the feeding of a multitude belonging to the same district. The narrative of St. Matthew agrees with this, the cure of the dumb man being omitted. In that of St. Luke the whole of this period is passed over.

SEC. I. (Mark vii. 1–23; Matt. xv. 1–20.) Some of the causes of the opposition of the Pharisees have been already stated (ii. 7, 14); another is now described. The disciples of Jesus disregarded the traditional rules respecting *purifications*; as they did those respecting the *sabbath*. The teachers who came from Jerusalem after them demanded the reason of their conduct; not seeking instruction, but using authority to censure. Therefore, instead of replying to them, Jesus reproved them for their inconsistency and wickedness. He showed the worthlessness of their traditions, by showing in one case their contrariety to a Divine command. Then addressing the people

seen some of His disciples eating bread with unholy that is, unwashed. ³ For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, unless for a pygmy's length they wash the hands and arms, do not eat; observing the tradition of the

simple principle, that religious purity belongs only to the mind. He appealed to the common sense of men for the truth of this doctrine, though it was not readily received even by the disciples. When they afterwards sought further instruction, He merely repeated the principle with illustrations. That which is eaten affects only the body, and nature provides for the removal of what is unwholesome. But the words and actions come from within, and they have a moral character, and may make a man holy. The dispute was respecting the tradition of the ancients, not of Moses. That law having Divine authority, its observance was due to God; but observing the tradition was only obeying men. The law moreover was conducive to sanitary and social effects, which made it useful for the people to whom it was given; but the latter was useless to the Jews, and injurious to their consciences, being based on superstition, and substituted a corporeal for a spiritual service.

This gathering is contrasted with that before mentioned (vi. 30). St. Mark states that both scribes and Pharisees came from Jerusalem. They came with hostile purposes, and soon found occasion for opposition.

The participle of this verse is connected with the preceding, and both the verb at the beginning of the sentence, the construction is simple and complete; no ellipsis or parenthesis need be supposed. The addition, *and fault*, is a manifest interpolation. The *common* is opposed to *holy* or *holy*; "God taught me not to call any man common, or im-mortal" (Acts x. 28).

This account of Jewish customs is peculiar to St. Mark. The men of Jerusalem seem here to be distinguished from the men of Galilee; both were Jews, but the former were more strict in the observance of religious customs. The country of Judæa was only a part of the Jews' country, and the people of the nation; but the name of the part was extended to the whole; it was not always (i. 5; John iii. 22; xi. 8, 54; Acts xii. 3). The word denotes both the *fist*, and a *measure*,—the length from the fingers to the elbow. A noun in the dative case is sometimes used to denote the *means* by which an action is done, and sometimes the *rule* according to which it is done. The Talmud, as quoted by Lightfoot, directs that hands be washed to the elbow; a rule which is similar to that here, the name denoting the arm and the hand. Evidently, the purifi-

ancients. ⁴ And coming from a market, unless they baptize themselves, they do not eat. And there are many other

cations referred to were beyond what was naturally proper. Mention of the *extent* of the required washing is therefore most suitable. One fist might be washed with the other hand, but it is impossible to wash the hands with a fist. The interpretation a *handful* [of water] is only conjectural, and less appropriate, this being the smallest quantity that could be used. The translation *oft*, comes from another reading, which has no authority. Two kinds of purification are here noticed,—the less, and the greater,—the one for the hands, the other for the whole person.

⁴ The associations of the *market place*, increasing much the danger of ceremonial defilement, were supposed to require always a more elaborate and complete purification. This is one of the three passages in the New Testament which refer to Jewish baptisms, and show, that, whatever may have been the primary meaning of the word, *it had become the name of a class of purifications*, distinguished by their importance, and not by the mode of their performance. Nothing is more common in all languages than the change, through new usages, of the primary signification of words. The *just* is not always what is commanded; nor the *right* what is according to rule; nor *truth*, what a man thinketh. From Heb. ix. 10 it appears that the *purifications appointed by law*, for the service of the tabernacle, were called *baptisms*; but none of these were immersions. From Luke xi. 38 we learn, that the same name was given to a purification, which a stranger might be expected to make, when merely asked by a host to take refreshment in his house; and we know that in the houses of Jews jars of water stood ready for such services (John ii. 6). Here the name is given to purifications of the person, observed by all the people of Judæa when they came from a market; and to the purifications of couches also. But the practice of immersion is unmentioned, unparalleled, and almost impossible. When a modern traveller relates that he *bagged* elephants, giraffes, hippopotami, and lions, no one supposes that they were put into canvas or leathern receptacles; but this agrees with the primary meaning of the term, and is not absolutely impossible. There is no more reason for supposing, when men and women are said to be *baptized* in public, that they bathed or were immersed in water. In common Greek, *to baptize* was to immerse, or overwhelm, or sink; and a *baptism* was not a momentary immersion, as *dipping*, but some continued submersion. The shore was *baptized* when it was covered by the tide, and a ship was *baptized* when it was *sunk*. An object is said to be of an *unbaptizable* nature, as cork; because it will not *sink*, though very easily it is *dipped*. In dense water persons who cannot swim are not *baptized*;

things which they have learnt to observe,—baptisms of cups, and of jugs, and of copper vessels, and of couches. ⁵ Thereupon the Pharisees and the scribes question Him; Wherefore do not Thy disciples walk according to the tradition of the ancients, but eat bread with unwashed hands?

⁶ He then in reply said to them, Rightly did Isaiah prophesy concerning you, dissemblers, as it is written,

because they do not *sink*, though they may be dipped. A classic baptism was an obvious and adequate cause of *destruction*; so that to *baptize*, and to *save*, are contrary actions. The figurative use of the word in classic Greek is always of one kind,—for what is evil: a man was baptized with debts, taxes, calamities, and sins. But in the New Testament the usage is altogether different:—(1) When applied to material objects, it is restricted to sacred things, *rites of purification*, and is never used as a common term. (2) In regard to what is mental, it is always used with some reference to the religious service, and the good of which it was a symbol. (3) No common term is ever used as descriptive of the rite; it is not spoken of as a dipping, but as a purification. (4) The nouns for *baptizer*, and *baptism*, are not found in classic Greek, and seem to have been framed from the verb in its restricted application. (5) The verb itself then received another construction, objects being baptized *from* as well as with, in, into, and under. Men are said to be baptized, that is purified, *from* a dead body; and to baptize, that is purify, their minds *from* anger and evil passions. All purifications were not baptisms; but all baptisms were purifications. The word must be retained as the name of a *class of purifications*, which from their religious nature, and their peculiar importance, might be called *consecrations*. To follow classic usage, we must put for baptism, overwhelming or sinking,—and not dipping; and to follow later rabbis, Jewish or Christian, we must have baptisms without clothes. How all the purifications called *baptisms* were performed, cannot be certainly known, and is of no importance, no mode of baptism being enjoined. But it is quite certain that public baptisms were not performed, as they sometimes are now, by dipping the clothed person in water; such a ceremony being neither prescribed, nor practised, till long after the age of the apostles. The contrary opinion rests entirely on the assumption that the mode of performing a religious rite can be learnt from the etymology of its name.

⁶ The quotation is according to the Septuagint, which differs slightly from

9 And He said to them, Rig
mandment of God, in order th
tradition. 10 For Moses said
thy mother ;” and “ *He who*
him perish by death.” 11 Bu
should say to father or to mo
might be useful to thee is Korb
12 and you permit him no long

the present Hebrew text (Isa. xxix. 13). T
of the people of his day agreed with th
addressed, and therefore it might well be
speaking from God, but it is not always
xiv. 3).

9 The charge brought against the Phar
of their teaching, the introductory statem
quotation from the law is added to show th
the neglect of which was encouraged, an
tional instruction. The law, requiring hos
tions to their support and comfort. Tre
this obligation. By a *general consecr*
might be useful to parents, it was made sa
for whatever was given to them was incl
withheld from them had not been

r or his mother ; ¹³ subverting the word of God by tradition, which you delivered. And many such like
rs you do.

And calling to all the people He said to them,
ken to Me, all of you, and consider. ¹⁵ There is
ng from without the man which, entering into him,
nake him unholy ; but the things which proceed from
those are the things which make the man unholy.
any one has ears to hear, let him hear.

And when He entered into a house, away from the
itude, His disciples questioned Him respecting the
ple. ¹⁸ And He said to them, Are you also so incon-

otations might be in chronological order,—first from Moses, and then
saiah. A similar difference appears in the reports of the conversation
king divorce, where the quotation from Genesis precedes that from
ronomy in Matt. xix. 5, but follows it in Mark x. 7. The chronological
would be naturally substituted for another ; but if it had been the
al it would hardly have been forsaken.

Examples of such vows from the Talmud are given by Grotius and
ein.

The authority claimed by the Pharisees having been shown to be worth-
y the contrariety of their teaching to the Divine command, the people
ldressed, and to them the conduct of the disciples is justified. An
is made to the consciences of men. They could see for themselves,
hat was external, affecting the body and not the mind, had no *moral*
ce ; and therefore they might infer that it could have no *religious*

Only that which made the mind worse, morally, could make any man
ceptable to God.

St. Matthew states that the disciples spoke to Jesus of the offence
l to the Pharisees, and were told that human teaching must be op-
when contrary to Divine. He says that St. Peter asked for further
ction ; and the history shows that the apostle's undue regard to things
al was not removed, till he had received many more lessons (Acts x.).
statement is described as a *parable*, not because it was obscure, but
se it was the *presentation* of one thing, to *suggest* and teach another.
the *moral* truth, which was self-evident, the *religious* lesson might be
d.

siderate? Do you not perceive that everything from without, entering into the man, is unable to make him unholy? ¹⁹ because it does not go into the mind, but into the belly, and goes off into the draught, making pure that is eaten.

²⁰ Then He said, What goes forth out of the man that makes the man unholy. ²¹ For from within, out of the mind of men, bad conclusions go forth,—adulteries, fornications, murders, ²² thefts, overreachings, iniquities, deceit, licentiousness, envious looking, evil speaking, arrogance, foolishness. ²³ All these wicked things go forth from within, and make the man unholy.

ec. II.
tile
ser.

²⁴ And rising up He went away thence into the border lands of Tyre and Sidon. And entering into a house, He wished that no one should know, and He could not

[The supposed power of baptism with water is apparently in direct opposition to the lesson here taught by our Lord. He said that a material object, *entering into* the body, could not *defile* the mind, and that men ought by common sense to know this. He did not say that a material object, *applied to* the body, could not *cleanse* the mind; but the same mode of reasoning conducts inevitably to this conclusion. There is nothing to prevent such an extension of the principle; nor is there anything in the New Testament to show that the conclusion is wrong. The apostles never taught that Christian baptism with water would really do what the Jewish baptisms with water were falsely supposed to do. Many things have been widely received respecting both the name, and the use, of baptism with water, for which no proper evidence can be found. They are merely traditions of men. From the New Testament we may learn both the signification of the name, and the use of the rite; and only from the New Testament. Nothing has been found there to favour the opinion, that the apostles ever baptized persons with water, except in the way in which the priests administered all public purifications,—by sprinkling. Nor has anything been found in the teaching of Christ, and the apostles, to favour the opinion, that by baptism with water the religious condition is changed, without mental

be hid. ²⁵ For a woman, whose little daughter had an evil spirit, hearing of Him, came and fell down at His feet.

consciousness; or that thereby both character and condition are changed. These are remains of Jewish and pagan superstitions, without any authority from the word of God.]

Human traditions are often preferred to Divine instruction. Prejudice will prevent the reception of the plainest truths.

In morals, and in religion, the conscious mind is everything.

What does not affect the moral character cannot affect the relation of man to God.

SEC. II. (Mark vii. 24-30; Matt. xv. 21-28.) The renewed hostility of the Pharisees now occasioned the departure of Jesus from Galilee; and, for the first time, He went into the country of the Gentiles. His object was not to preach publicly, and perform miracles there; for it was the Divine arrangement that the gospel should be first proclaimed to the Jews; and that among them chiefly the outward signs should be done, which were symbols of the spiritual blessings to be extended to all nations. But it was to be shown, that there were children of God in heathen lands, and that more faith would be found in them than in the Jewish people. Soon after His arrival in the district, a heathen woman, who had a demoniac child, came to Him, seeking help. Three applications are related by St. Matthew, of which the last only is noticed here. The woman first called to Him in the street, and no answer was given to her request. It was not refused; and she found encouragement to persevere, in the countenance of Jesus, when no words of comfort were yet spoken. The disciples asked that she should be sent away, because of her continued entreaty; and they were reminded that the mission of their Lord, for such works, was only to Jews. This was not a refusal of their request, or of hers; but the statement of a truth, which made proper some difference of conduct. Finally, in the house the mother renewed her supplication, and she was reminded of a proverb which contained a lesson not to be neglected, but which did not apply to her case. She was called to show its inapplicability; and her faith enabled her to do what the disciples had failed to do. To both, statements were made for the same end,—to teach that *principles* were maintained, in *actions* that might seem contrary to them. She saw that in the words of Jesus there was

²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, a Syrophenician by race; and she asked Him, that He would cast out the demon from her daughter. ²⁷ But Jesus said to her, Let the children first be satisfied: for it is not proper to take the bread of the children, and throw it to the house dogs. ²⁸ Then she answered and said to Him, True, Lord, for the house dogs under the table also eat of the children's crumbs. ²⁹ And He said to her, For this saying,

no rejection of her prayer, but encouragement to hope; and declaring that with humble earnestness, she received a commendation of her faith and the cure of her child. The narrative of the centurion presents a similar example of humility, kindness, and faith, in a heathen; and of a cure in a distant place (Matt. viii. 5).

²⁴ The journey was into the heathen land, and not merely to its neighbourhood; the woman coming out of her house to seek help, and not out of the country. The mention of the more distant Sidon, as well as Tyre, shows this. The borders of a country belong to it, and are part of it, not merely adjacent. (Mark v. 17; x. 1; Matt. iv. 13; viii. 34; xv. 22.) The subsequent journey was not through Galilee, but Decapolis (vii. 31).

²⁵ With the Jews the name of Greek was extended, as a religious designation to many who were not of that nation (Rom. i. 16). This woman was another race, and the use of the Greek language was too common to be a distinguishing mark.

²⁷ Most certainly Jesus did not apply an opprobrious name to this woman. Proud and scornful Jews might use the proverb to suggest an appellation which they did not wish to utter; but this could not be the purpose of His words. The dogs referred to are not those who would be selected to express contempt, but those whose place was under the table, to share the meals of the family. The proverb would have been appropriate, if the Gentile had asked that something should, for her sake, be taken from Jews. But this was not her request: she hoped to receive much, and that others would lose nothing by her gain.

²⁹ St. Matthew states that Jesus commended her faith, as He did that of the centurion, and that the child was immediately restored to health. Miracles were appointed means, limited and temporary, for higher ends, universal and permanent. The ordinary faith, which merely recognised the power of Jesus, was sufficient to secure for a Jew the benefit of a miraculous cure; but more than this was requisite, to make proper the extension of the

y; the demon has departed from thy daughter. And going away to her house, she found the demon departed, and the daughter laid on the couch.

And coming forth from the districts of Tyre and Sidon, He again came unto the lake of Galilee, by the ^{Sec. Cure i} ^{Decap} side of the districts of Decapolis. ³² And men brought Him a deaf stammerer, and besought Him to put His

benefit to a Gentile. The delay in granting the request gave occasion to the exercise and expression of faith; and, if accompanied by a look of kindness, would not have even the appearance of harshness or indifference.

We have many outward advantages, and some few. They who have little may profit more than they who have much.

Law is to be observed, and lower laws yield to higher. Faith always finds encouragement, and obtains reward.

EC. III. (Chap. vii. 31-37.) On leaving the districts belonging to Tyre and Sidon, Jesus journeyed eastward with the disciples through a part of Samaria, and then southward through Decapolis; and so came again to the eastern side of the lake, over against Galilee. As in the journey through Samaria instruction was given to the people, as well as to the disciples, so probably was on this and all similar journeys. Jesus went about doing good, when He did not perform miracles. Before arriving at the lake He was recognised by some, who brought to Him a dumb man to be healed.

Details of the cure are given with unusual particularity; and again attention is made of what was done to prevent publicity, and of the general acknowledgment that followed notwithstanding. The conduct of Gentiles seems to be contrasted with that of Jews. When Jesus was rejected by those who had seen many miracles, He was received by those who had seen

Some MSS. read *through* Sidon, instead of *and*, and omit *Sidon* in v. 24. These changes seem to have been made to show more clearly the course of the journey. Its end was on the eastern side of the lake, from which the return was across the lake to Galilee (viii. 10). Decapolis was inhabited chiefly by Gentiles.

and upon him. ³³ And taking him away from the crowd separately, He put His fingers into his ears; and spitting touched his tongue: ³⁴ and looking up to heaven He sighed, and said to him, Ephphatha, which is, Be opened. ³⁵ And directly his ears were opened, and the binding of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke plainly.

³⁶ And He charged them that they should tell it to no one. But how much He charged them, the more extensively they published. ³⁷ And they were exceedingly astonished saying, He has done all things well; He makes both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

³³ The unusual conduct of Jesus seems to have resulted from the peculiarity of the case. The man was brought by others, but being himself conscious, their faith could not be in stead of his. His infirmity prevented his receiving instruction in the ordinary way, and therefore actions took the place of words. What Jesus did to him was a promise of Divine help, which his senses could receive; and it produced the faith which was required. The use of *spittle*, in this and in two other similar cases (viii. 23; John i. 6), was like the occasional use of *oil* by the disciples. That such *signs* would tend to produce faith, is certain; but that the material objects were in any other way *means* for the cure effected, is without any evidence, and is inconsistent with their occasional use. The looking upward was the expression of devotion (vi. 41; John xi. 41; xvii. 1), and the sighing of compassion (John xi. 38).

³⁴ Aramæan might be more intelligible to the person addressed than Greek as in a former case (v. 41).

³⁶ Gentiles were not refused, when they came for miraculous cures; their application for these benefits was not to be promoted. Publicity enjoined when it would lead only to the pursuit of spiritual good (v. The hearing of the deaf, and the speaking of the dumb, may refer to mind as well as to the body (Luke iv. 18; vii. 22; John v. 25; Isa. xxxiv. 5). The declaration of the people respected, not only the deaf man, but also the whole ministry of Jesus among them. acquiesced in the rarity of miracles, acknowledging the spiritual blessing which they received. A similar general acknowledgment is given Matthew (xv. 31), in connection with other cures which preceded the next recorded, the last among the Gentiles.

those days there being a very large multitude, and having nothing to eat, Jesus calling to His disciples to them, ² I have compassion on the multitude, because now three days they have stayed with Me, and

Sec. :
Feeding
of Four
Thousand

aculous signs are for a few, spiritual blessings are for all.

terial objects, expressing moral dispositions, produce moral results.

Sec. IV. (Mark viii. 1-10; Matt. xv. 29-39.) When Jesus and the disciples reached the lake, He went to the high land on the eastern side, stayed some time, before leaving the Gentile country and returning to the land of Israel. According to the narrative of St. Matthew, when He was seated there many sick persons were brought to Him in faith, restored to health; and of the people it is said, *they glorified the name of Israel*,—in whose name all the words and works of Jesus were done and done. After teaching and healing, Jesus fed the multitude as on a former occasion. Both narratives are given by St. Mark and St. Matthew, and both are referred to in a subsequent discourse of our Lord. There are moreover many differences, which show that two events are related. The numbers fed, the provisions distributed, the fragments collected, and the conduct of Jesus, are described differently. The one miracle was after a day's absence from Galilee; the other after a long journey through heathen lands. The one was chiefly, if not entirely, for Jews; the other chiefly, if not entirely, for Gentiles. The feeding of the four thousand was an exceptional miracle, which Jesus had refused to repeat for the half of Jews: it is therefore quite natural that the apostles should at once receive the intimation of Jesus respecting what He was willing to do for this multitude. They spoke only of their own inability to supply the wants of the people; but they did not forget what He had done a few days before. As some days had already passed, during which bread was given, they were not sure that it would be given now. There were only a few miraculous cures for the Gentiles, while those for the Jews were innumerable; and it might therefore be doubted if Jesus would do now for Gentiles what He had only once done for Jews.

The apparent need of the people was much greater than on the former occasion; and Jesus expressed His compassion for them, before the disciples could act on their behalf.

they have not anything to eat. ³ And if I should dismiss them fasting to their home, they will be exhausted on the road, for some of them come from afar. ⁴ And His disciples answered Him, Whence can one satisfy these with bread here in a desert place? ⁵ And He asked them, How many loaves have you? And they said, Seven.

⁶ And He directed the multitude to sit down upon the ground. And taking the seven loaves, offering thanks, He brake, and gave to His disciples, that they should distribute; and they distributed to the multitude. ⁷ And they had a few small fishes; and having blessed, He bade them distribute these also. ⁸ So they ate, and were satisfied. And they took up the fragments which were over, seven hampers.

⁹ Now they who ate were about four thousand men. And He dismissed them. ¹⁰ And directly getting into the boat with His disciples, He came to the parts of Dalmanutha.

⁷ The fishes were probably brought after the bread. In the previous narrative they are mentioned separately by St. Mark and St. John.

⁸ A different term is in all the narratives used for the receptacles of the fragments on the first occasion. The *baskets* were those commonly used by travelling Jews. The articles now mentioned were probably larger; and the only other notice of them, in the New Testament, occurs in a narrative of what happened in a neighbouring city of the Gentiles (Acts ix. 25).

¹⁰ The district is by St. Matthew named from Magdala, a village on the western side of the lake, near Tiberias.

The whole of this division, both by its principles and its facts, points to the call of the Gentiles.

Some obtain blessings soon and easily, and some after difficulty and delay.

Christ's compassion exceeds the expectations of His disciples, and is alike for all people.

Outlines.

The Eucharistic Feast.

**This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often
eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he
."—1 COR. xi. 25, 26.**

the observance of the Lord's Supper still binding
n the Christian Church? What was our Lord's de-
a in the institution of this ordinance? Does its ob-
vance speak to those who are unconsciously interested
he event it commemorates? Is this ordinance to be
petually observed? Each of these questions is im-
tant; all of them are answered in our text.

We reject the Romish dogma of transubstantiation,
the equally heretical notion of the Real Presence so
erally held by Anglican priests. And in observing
Lord's Supper we regard it as only commemorative
His sacrificial death; as a profession of our faith in
atonement; our love for this expression of His love
s; while we at the same time testify to the world our
reciation of the person and work of Christ, who by
n is "despised and rejected."

The observance of the Lord's Supper is—

I. DIVINELY COMMANDED. "This *do ye*."

His command was primarily given to the apostles;
had there been no repetition of the command or
her allusion to this ordinance, we might have con-
led that it was designed exclusively for them. But
question is settled in our text. The Christians at
inth, at least twenty-five years after our Lord insti-
ed this supper, are exhorted to observe it. Hence the
rence is a fair one that it was a command given to
Church, as well as to its apostles, and is as binding
n us as it was upon them.

II. A COMMEMORATIVE EVENT. "In *remembrance* of
,"

It is a memorial service. The design is to refresh our memories with the love of Christ; to bring more vividly to our recollection His sacrificial work, so that our love to Him may be increased and strengthened. While the bread we eat reminds us of His broken body, wounded and pierced in the offering up of Himself for our sin, and the wine we drink reminds us of that precious blood which He shed for us, and by which we are cleansed from our defilement, the entire service increases our estimate of His finished work, and impresses us with the importance of that death by which the ransomed live.

III. A PROCLAMATION TO THE WORLD OF A GLORIOUS FACT. "*Ye do show the Lord's death.*"

Every communicant becomes by the observance of this ordinance a silent but impressive preacher of Christ crucified. Our obedience to this command is a protest against the infidelity, the Socinianism, the self-righteousness, and the irreligion of the age. And while we thus protest against the world's rejection of the Saviour, we in the simple observance of His command proclaim the fact that "whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have everlasting life." In thus showing the Lord's death, we discharge a two-fold duty—to Him who has redeemed us, and to the world who despises and rejects its Redeemer. Who can tell how successfully Christian men and women are thus preaching Christ by their silent and unostentatious obedience to this command?

IV. A PERPETUAL OBLIGATION. "*Till he come.*"

The institution of this ordinance inaugurated the present dispensation, and it will remain in force till Christ come to close the dispensation and to render the ordinance no longer necessary. Till then we are to observe it with regularity, with a grateful spirit and with due solemnity. Nothing is to interfere with its observance: time, changes, passing events are to leave it untouched. The design of the service is never to be forgotten; its spirituality never to be lost; its significance and force are

ain to the end. The solemn yet cheering words, "He is come" are to be associated with every service, reminding us that His coming draws near. The service will stimulate us to a holier life, and to an habitual preparation for a purer world. It may be that those who are and remain when Christ shall come will be commemorating His dying love, and thus in the act of obedience shall hear the welcome cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh."

Engagement more desirable, no service more suitable for the last on earth. No exercise so hallowing and precious to the soul in its passage home to rest.

"Oh happy servant he,
In *such a posture* found!
He shall his Lord with rapture see,
And be with honour crowned.

Christ shall the banquet spread
With His own royal hand;
And raise that favourite servant's head
Amidst the angelic band."

J. B. D.

Next-Sandwich.

The Light of the World.

is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."—JOHN iii.

These words are part of our Lord's address to Nicodemus. This scene is worth our consideration. Nicodemus came to hear of the way of life as taught by the new teacher; and to listen to His words he went to Him by night. He has been perhaps unjustly blamed for this. Many at first have gone merely for further instruction. It is however to be condemned if he was convinced of the truth of our Lord's mission, and yet was afraid to openly profess his belief.

I. The Light of the world.

(a) "Light is come into the world." This language is applied to our Lord by St. John,—“That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John i. 9). Consider Him as a light. The prophet foretold that “darkness should cover the earth, and gross darkness the people” (Isa. lx. 2), but that the Lord should arise and His glory be seen. And St. Paul commanded his converts to “cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light” (Rom. xiii. 12). God is represented as the eternal Source of light: men have lost God; therefore they are in darkness. Our Lord came to restore this light to the world.

(b) He is light in His nature. Through Him the Deity was revealed. *Light makes manifest*: He made manifest the realities of eternity. *Light brings gladness*: we dread gloom, we long for even a little light—a star-beam if we cannot have the sun. *Light brings health*: in the dark, life languishes. As colour cannot exist without light, so neither can perfect health.

(c) Our Lord's life is the only one that will bear a close scrutiny. If we look at an opaque object in a strong light we see many of its imperfections; but if we put a lamp within a transparent object, such as a crystal vase, we perceive every flaw it has. Now the character of Christ has been looked at in both these ways: yet even the light within has only shown how perfect He was.

II. The condemnation of men.

(a) God is just, whatever the world may say to the contrary. Men are only condemned for the misuse of the which they possess. You do not blame a child for not learning its lesson, if it have no book. You do not blame a blind man because he cannot distinguish the colours of different flowers.

(b) But men are condemned because they will not use the light. It is around them, they close their eyes to it. Consider how long we, for example, have had this light.

since childhood, through youth, in manhood ; yet the best trifle has called us away from it.

The light has come to us again and again, almost as soon as the brightness of the morning. Yet again and again we have refused it. Ours has been oft-repeated rejection of it.

c) Why is this ? Because man does not desire it. Why does not he desire it ? Because his deeds are evil. Sin is the key to the whole problem. He does not choose to retain God in his thoughts. If we rightly consider, this shows the sad state in which he lives.

There are certain persons who trifle with sin, yet sin is no trifle. Is disease a trifle, the fever that ends in death ? Is ignorance a trifle, the ignorance that leads to ruin, the galleys, or the scaffold ? Is a quarrel a trifle, a quarrel that brings about a war ? Nor is sin a trifle ; it is death.

Conclusion.—We have before us mercy, judgment, folly. Mercy : light is come. Judgment : men will be condemned rejecting it. Folly : to keep their evil deeds, they refuse to receive the Light of the world. Let us strive to receive aright the gifts bestowed upon us.

HUBERT BOWER.

A Sacramental Address.

I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—MATT. xxviii. 20.

THE Divine assurance.

1. The human consolation.

The Divine assurance.

1) Whose words are these ? Christ's ; they are full of His deep and tender love. They assure us of His fidelity. He spoke them just before His ascension, and frequently they are the words of the Saviour who *had* passed through all tribulation, not of the Man of Sorrows. Many persons have desired to see pictures of our Lord ; we have no authentic portrait of Him. Nor do we

need one: these words explain His heart more than a thousand pictures could do.

(b) He spoke for all time, looked down the ages, even to this time and this company. This was His latest benediction to the Church, the influence of which is still felt. Yet only as we know Christ, and enter into His Spirit, can these words become words of power to us.

II. The human consolation.

(a) Man is friendless without God. Therefore God in Christ comes to be his friend. A special way in which He manifests Himself to us is through the supper of the Lord.

(b) What does this bring before us? Our weakness, God's strength. Man can no more live alone than the bindweed flower can climb without support. As well may he attempt to fly up to the star-lit heaven as attain to God without the aid of His Holy Spirit. Therefore He has appointed resting-places for us, where we may be enabled to renew our strength. This is one.

(c) We should renew our vows of dedication for the coming time. The past with all its sins is gone, the future with all its opportunity is ours. Here we may begin afresh.

We are at the gate of paradise, for Christ is here. Is this fanaticism? No, sober truth. He is in our midst, one of our company, although we cannot see Him. If we listen we can almost hear the music of heaven. Having been so near heaven, shall we go back to be indifferent in the world? Suppose one could be caught up into paradise, and yet come back to earth, would not his whole after-life be changed by the vision of the eternal glory?

We cannot see our Lord now, but we are to see Him hereafter.

This sacred table is but a means to an end. The end is Christ's presence, to be fully revealed to us in His kingdom. "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face."

But are there any of you who will not come? Why? Because you do not love the Saviour. Then there sounds over you the mournful words spoken by our Lord over dead sinners,—“Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.”

HUBERT BOWER.

Human Equality.

“Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man; and keep the charge of the Lord thy God,” etc.—1 KINGS ii. 1-3.

WE have here the dying charge of an old and experienced king to a young one. The lesson is that ALL MEN ARE EQUAL IN THE SIGHT OF GOD; because—

1. Kings even are not exempt from *human mortality*.
2. Nor from *human frailty* (ver. 2).
3. Nor from *human responsibility* (ver. 3).

A second lesson may be learned from the same text, namely, *that obedience to the will of God inevitably issues in prosperity*, in the best sense of the word.

Hartland.

F. W.

Man's Ignorance of the Day of his Death.

“And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death.”—
 GEN. xxvii. 2.

I. THAT this ignorance is universal.

Without exception, this ignorance sways its sceptre over every country and age. The high and the low, the poor and the rich, the learned and the unlearned, the civilized and the savage, the saint and the sinner, are all alike in the dark concerning this fact.

II. That this ignorance is unblamable.

Religious ignorance is criminal. Death deeply con-

cerns man as a religious being. The pagan is without excuse at the bar of God : his ignorance is a wilful neglect of the means of knowing better. But the Judge will hold no one guilty for not knowing the day of his death.

III. That this ignorance will never be superseded by knowledge.

Notwithstanding the march of intellect and the progress of knowledge, man will never arrive at this discovery. The brightest genius, aided by the most dogged perseverance, will never invent anything that will enable mankind to fathom this mystery. This knowledge is too deep for the plummet of the most profound philosopher ever to sound, and too high for the flight of the greatest astronomer ever to reach. The day of death, like the final judgment, will ever continue a secret, known to none save the omniscient God Himself.

IV. That this ignorance manifests the wisdom and goodness of God.

To know the day of our death would incapacitate alike for present duties and enjoyments. Were mankind to know the moment they would have to take their last gasp, the world—literary, political, commercial, and religious—would be at a stand still.

V. That this ignorance ought to arouse us to religious activity.

“Be ye therefore ready also :” men in general act upon this principle concerning the unknown future. Respecting temporal things, provisions are made for uncertainties. And this great uncertainty, death, has its due effect upon men secularly. The man of forty summers, in the bloom of his manhood, coolly sits down to make his will. The children of this world are wise in their generation. Would to God that men were as wise where higher interests are at stake !

Pisgah Talywain.

RICHARD JONES.

Moral Increase.

have planted, Apollos watered ; but God gave the increase."—1 Cor. iii. 6.

OBSERVE—

I. THAT ALL MORAL INCREASE IS OF GOD. (1) The cause of the increase, (2) the teaching of the Bible, and the experience of Christians, show that God *alone* can give it.

II. THAT THE MORAL INCREASE WHICH GOD GIVES IS MOST VALUABLE. It is so (1) in itself, (2) in its adaptation, (3) in its extent, (4) in its perpetuity, and (5) in its universality.

III. THAT GOD GIVES ALL MORAL INCREASE ON A FIXED PRINCIPLE. There must be (1) personal, (2) united, (3) believing, (4) earnest, (5) prayerful, and (6) persevering effort.

Bradford.

B. WOOD.

Christian Influence.

"For none of us liveth unto himself," etc.—Rom. xiv. 7, 8.

THE apostle in the beginning of this chapter inculcates the widest charity, in dealing with those who may differ from us in sentiment. But we are still to hold the truth with an intelligent and firm hand, being "fully persuaded of our own minds," and remembering the influence of our example on others. We remark—

I. That a man cannot live only to himself. Men act and react upon each other. They form a whole, the parts of which cannot be separated. Each man is a link in the great chain of being.

II. Our relationships are natural. Through our ancestors, Adam's nature has been transmitted down to us. Our position in life, our habits, our social position, our duties, have been, under God, in a large measure formed for us. We suffer disabilities, and we enjoy advantages, transmitted down to us from those to whom we are

united by the laws of nature. Our forefathers lived for us ; and so we live for our children.

2. We live for the world and for posterity, by our influence. We come daily in contact with men in business, in social life, in the Church ; and our conduct, however insignificant we are, will more or less necessarily influence the world.

3. But self-denial is inculcated by the apostle when he asserts that "no man liveth to himself." Here is the grand principle of vicarious suffering, which is everywhere seen. The mother suffers that her child may live. The father toils that his children may enjoy ease. Armies are slain, in order that their countrymen may live and be free. In nature the seed dies that the fruit may grow. Winter, spring, summer prepare for autumn. Each object has its peculiar work, which contributes towards the benefit of the whole. The Lord Jesus died for us, and it is our duty to "lay down our lives," literally or metaphorically, "for the brethren."

II. It is of the utmost importance, for our own sake and for that of others, that we live well. It is thus that we shall "live unto the Lord."

1. It is our personal duty to live well. Thus we work out *our own* salvation. God demands of each one purity in the inner man, to grow in grace, to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.

2. It is our duty to live well for the sake of others. Example speaks louder than precept, we preach the gospel by a good life, we should try to make the world better.

3. By living well, and for others, we glorify our God and our religion.

4. We should do it *from* love to Christ, and in order to *show* our love to Christ.

(1) We must give an account to God how we live.

(2) Do you live in obedience to the spirit of the text?

(3) Pray that God would enable you to live to Him and for the good of men.

Stanley St. Leonard's.

T. D. JONES—

Reviews.

N OF THE FOUR GOSPELS. By CONSTANTINE TISCHENDORF. Translated by WILLIAM L. GAGE. *Hodder Stoughton.*

men living have done more for biblical scholars than Constantine Tischendorf. He has contributed in no small way to settle the text of the New Testament, as well as of the Septuagint. He is a man who has spent his life collating MSS. and collecting evidence. In this he is a enthusiast, and his joy on coming on some old MS. is as great as the joy of the scientific truth-seeker making some important discovery. On the night on which he made the discovery of the ancient Sinaitic Bible, he was unable to sleep, and danced in his room for very excitement. The volume before us is an expansion of a little book known by the title "When were our Gospels written?" "THE N OF THE FOUR GOSPELS" is practically a new book, enlarged to three times its original size, and adapted for scholars rather than for popular readers. It is full of valuable information respecting the origin and the text of the four Gospels. A man like Tischendorf, accustomed to rest his conclusions on facts, as we might expect, differs materially from a popular writer, and in passing to his subject he deals with some of the details in a spirited and effectual way. The style of the book is thoroughly German. We should like to see the plain dress of German books less obviously foreign than it generally is. Perhaps in a book like the present, treating of a subject of importance and authorities for matters of most momentous importance, the anxiety of the translator to give the exact meaning of the author has prevented him taking the liberty of changing the style more after the manner of the English translator. It is a book that is most reliable, and calculated to reward a careful study.

SERMONS PREACHED AT BRIGHTON by the late REV. F. W. ROBERTSON. Fourth Series. *Smith, Elder & Co.*

This is the last of the cheap issue of Mr. F. W. Robertson's sermons. This last volume is as full of stimulating thoughts as any of the preceding volumes. We are glad to

see it announced that other two volumes of notes to sermons and fragments of lectures are in the press. The "fragments" of Mr. Robertson's lectures, judging from the specimens we have in his "Life and Letters," are such as most of our readers would desire as suggestive notes or outlines.

JOHN WESLEY ; or, THE THEOLOGY OF CONSCIENCE. Second edition. *Elliot Stock.*

This little volume is designed to prove "that there is no necessary antagonism between thorough-going evangelical orthodoxy and the favourite rationalistic dogma that a religion, to be suitable for the world, must have its intuitive root in the world's conscience." This the author proves in an earnest and interesting way.

SERMONS FOR ALL CLASSES. By T. M. MORRIS, Ipswich. *Elliot Stock.*

The sermons of which this volume is composed were the result of the impression made upon the preacher's mind by the conference held in London in the early part of last year for the purpose of ascertaining from working men what were the reasons which led so many of them to absent themselves from religious services. Mr. Morris to these sermons "secured a greatly and permanently increased attendance of the working class." This we should have expected. The sermons are full of earnest thought, the style is forcible and manly, and they are entitled with truth "Sermons for all Classes."

RECOLLECTIONS OF STUDENT LIFE, and Thoughts on our Time. By Rev. PROFESSOR HOPPUS. *Hodder & Stoughton.*

This is an address delivered to theological students. It is full of valuable and practical suggestions on the work of the ministry, as well as of interesting remarks upon theological questions.

Christ's Atonement

A FINISHED SACRIFICE.

BY THE REV. J. STOUGHTON.

We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.—HEB. x. 10.

There is a passage of Scripture which throws light upon the purpose of Christ's atonement. We learn from several texts that we have redemption through His blood, in the forgiveness of sins. Our guilt is removed

by His death. An expiation has been offered, on the ground of which the righteous Judge of the universe can accept and justify the believer. But more than this, we are taught in the text that the sacrifice of the Redeemer has a moral influence on the character of His people.

His coming to do the will of God, He has not only justified but sanctified the Church; He has not only placed it in a right relation to God, but Christ has also made it righteous in itself. His self-sacrifice has in it a virtue producing this result. We do not gather hence merely the idea that there is in the doctrine of the atonement a moral power which is conducive to holiness; but we infer that in this atonement itself there is a renewing, a hallowing, a consecrating virtue.

But it is not upon the word "sanctified," only upon the expression "once for all," that we now lay stress. Our object is to enforce the doctrine of evangelical Protestantism, that Christ's atonement is a perfected work, accomplished once for all, in opposition to the Roman

Catholic doctrine that Christ's sacrifice is repeated in the mass, that there is an offering of His body and blood in the due celebration of the Lord's Supper. **It** was this doctrine which played so conspicuous a part in the religion of the times before the Reformation; it ~~was~~ this doctrine which at the Reformation was so effectually assailed.

In the treatment of our subject we must enter into the examination of antagonist principles. The dogmas of transubstantiation, and of the sacrifice of the mass, stand opposed to the simple truth of Scripture touching the one perfected sacrifice of the Redeemer. They must be overthrown, that this may be exhibited.

I. For the maintenance of the doctrine of transubstantiation, Roman Catholics boldly refer to the language of the New Testament. As if conscious of the want of even an appearance of Scripture authority for a number of other things which they hold to be essential, they parade certain texts in this department of their controversy with Protestants. The method is to insist upon the literal sense. They herein profess the most profound deference to revelation, the most unhesitating submission of their understandings to holy writ; the entire surrender of their judgment and reason to the words of Christ and His apostles. The strain in which they indulge, in reference to this subject, is calculated to procure for them a favourable hearing. It is enough to propitiate a Christian antagonist, when an advocate on the opposite side speaks of the authority of the Divine oracles in terms of profound reverence; when man is apparently abased, and God exalted; and I think it is only candid to allow the probability that some are strongly fortified in

For opinions on this subject from the circumstance of their sacrificing their reason and sense (as they most unreasonably do sacrifice them) to the belief which they are founded on the literal interpretation of Scripture terms. They consider themselves as thereby making a virtuous and acceptable sacrifice. But we would ask whether submission to the word of God consists in the adoption of the literal sense more than in the adoption of a figurative sense. To submit to Scripture is surely to submit to the true and proper sense of Scripture, whether literal or figurative, to adopt that sense of the language which, all things looked at, seems clearly to have been the sense of the speaker or the writer. To take literally what was meant figuratively is just as much to pervert and dishonour Divine truth, as to take figuratively what was meant literally. To turn Jotham's parable of the trees that went forth to choose a king into history would be as grievous a misuse of the Bible as to turn the history of the patriarchs into a parable. The Jews understood literally the words, "Destroy this temple, and after three days I will build it up again," and understood Him as much as the Socinians do who figuratively interpret the words, The Son of man came "to give his life a ransom for many." It is, we repeat, not literally or in figuratively interpreting Scripture, but correctly interpreting it, that our holy task lies, and is fulfilled in Christ's blessed school.

A careful consideration of the narrative of the institution of the Lord's Supper clearly leads to the conclusion that the disciples must have accepted, and that their Lord must have used, the words figuratively when He said "This is my body, this is my blood." They had

been celebrating the passover, acknowledged to be a figurative rite; they had been eating of the paschal lamb, confessedly a figurative victim. Many hundred years before, such a lamb had been slain, and the blood of it had been sprinkled on the door-posts, so that the angel of the Lord passed over the crimson-marked dwelling and spared the inmates. The eating of the lamb was the feast of the passover unto the Lord, and it exhibited before the imagination of the participants the deliverance of their fathers and the means of its accomplishment; besides, the lamb itself was a type of Him who according to Isaiah should bear the iniquities of the people. How far the apostles entered into the design of the passover we cannot say; but its typical character is beyond dispute: and that they had some notion that it prefigured the means of a better deliverance than from Egyptian bondage seems quite clear. Bred up as they had been in the school of the temple, familiar as they had been with signs and symbols of religious objects from their youth, accustomed to the imaginative language and actions of their ancient prophets, and now in the very act of celebrating an expressive rite, they would be prepared to recognise a symbolical character in the words and acts of our Lord, though they might not have insight enough to see at once into the depth of their mystic meaning. When therefore, at the end of the paschal feast, our Lord took bread and wine and distributed them, the disciples would naturally conclude that this ceremony was of the same general character as that which had preceded, that it veiled under it some religious significancy. As they saw Him break the bread and divide it among them, and heard Him say,

“This is my body;” and again, when He sent round the cup, saying “This cup is the New Testament in my blood,” what would they conclude? What would you in their circumstances, and with their associations, have inferred? Would the literal sense have been the *first* to suggest itself to your mind? would the literal sense have been likely to suggest itself to your mind *at all*, any more than it would if, walking in one of the vineyards of Palestine, you had heard the Saviour say “I am the true Vine,” or if standing by the temple porch you had heard Him declare “I am the door.”

“This is my body:” taken literally, the words mean our Lord has performed a miracle. He has turned the unleavened loaf into the substance of His own flesh, even as He turned the water into wine. Consequently you expect to see a change. “It will alter in its colour and in its other qualities, and become what that mighty One declares.” You justly reason thus,—All the material changes which He has wrought are visible changes: He has never trifled with men, pretending like some juggler to do what He did not;—professing to turn water into wine, and leaving it the same as it was before;—professing to raise a man from the dead, and calling him a living man, and yet leaving him just as he was before. Heathen priests try to cheat people out of the use of their senses; but Jesus Christ never does. Hindoo priests say the car of Juggernaut moves of itself, though the ropes by which it is drawn along are seen in the hands of the blinded worshippers. Shall such mockery and insult, offered to the precious power of sight, be imputed to Him who maketh man see and is Himself the light and the truth?—No; imagining yourselves at that passover table, and judging

by what you had witnessed of His mighty, transparent, palpable, overwhelming miracles on other occasions, you would have seen at once this was not one of them. The absence of all visible change would be tantamount in your mind to no change at all. Never having heard of such thing as the schoolmen describe, a change of substance while the qualities remain the same—the substance of bread gone, yet the appearance, the taste, the colour, the form of it left,—the substance of Christ's body produced, yet no qualities or indication of anything human or Divine exhibited in it,—totally ignorant of such metaphysical distinctions, you would never dream of any alteration in the object before you. And when Christ told you "This cup is the New Testament in my blood," you would never imagine that He meant the chalice actually contained the blood of the covenant.

The literal sense would be seen to be irrelevant to the case, dishonourable to the Utterer. But most likely the literal sense would not occur to the mind at all. You would rather look on the language as the explanation of the symbol. Here is bread; Christ takes it up after the passover as a new sign: what means it? Here is a cup of wine; Christ sets it apart after the passover as a new sign: what means it? Here is a parable: what is its signification? But for the controversy, one would under such circumstances no more think of asking, Does He literally mean by these words that He has changed bread into His body, and changed wine into His blood? than one would have thought of asking, after John's vision of the candlesticks and his explanation "the seven candlesticks are the seven churches," Does he mean that each candlestick

ally turned into a Church? The literal meaning in a case is not the natural meaning, but a strained forced one.

The fixing of the true sense of the words of institution undermines the interpretation of other passages: Paul's *do not discern the Lord's body* must be interpreted accordingly; "not discern the Lord's body" must mean not perceiving the deep holy signification of the symbol; being "guilty of the Lord's body and blood of the Lord" must mean being guilty of a virtual dishonouring and profaning of that holy sacrifice by which men are redeemed; an irreverent treatment of the sign is irreverence done to the thing signified. Christ's words in the sixth chapter of John must be understood in the same way.

Symbolism is rational; it is founded on nature; it is familiar to the savage as well as the civilized. The Indian waves his hatchet as the token of war, and holds his eagle plume as the sign of peace. Symbolism is intelligible; it reads lessons which every one understands, makes appeals of whose touching power the senses are unconscious. Symbolism is sacred; it was of old the usher in God's school, the Jew learned many a lesson from it. Its teaching is respected now, and is not less striking and beautiful than in former days. The Lord's Supper is a symbol of the sacrifice of Christ: breaking of the bread is a lively symbol of the separation of His holy body on the cross of Calvary; pouring out of wine into the cup is a touching symbol of the effusion of His precious blood; the distribution of the elements is an impressive symbol of the communication of the benefits of His death to all believers; reception of them is a familiar symbol of the accept-

ance of His redemption by faith; while the act of eating and drinking is symbolic of the inward incorporation, we may so speak, of redeeming grace into our souls; and finally the intercommunion of saints at the Lord's table is symbolic of their spiritual unity as one blessed family in Christ. Such symbolism is a beautiful help to the soul, only to be appreciated by those who have enjoyed it. If the figure of an old divine be just, that "the ceremony is a chain of gold around the neck of faith, to deck and designate it," we may with equal justice add it is a staff in the hand of faith, by which she scales the heights of spiritual truth, and a telescope for the eye of faith, by which she brings to view glorious mysteries which sparkle like stars in the firmament of revelation. But we must proceed.

II. It is affirmed that the Lord's Supper is a sacrifice, and this doctrine is built upon the foregoing one of transubstantiation. It is said that the real body and blood of Christ are presented to God by the priest. He professes, in the words of Pope Pius IV., that in the mass there is offered a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. "Since the same Christ," it is declared in the Trentine decree, "who once offered Himself by His blood on the altar of the cross, is contained in this Divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the mass and offered without blood, the holy council teaches that the sacrifice is really propitiatory and made by Christ Himself. God is appeased by this oblation; the sacrifice now offered by the ministry of the priests is one and the same as that which Christ then offered on the cross, only the mode of offering is different." The doctrine of this sacrifice, we may observe, does not neces-

urily grow out of the doctrine of transubstantiation ; might be believed that the elements were so changed, st it would not follow as a logical consequence that there as any sacrificial presentation of them in the sacrament. ut the doctrine of this sacrifice does necessarily rest pon the former one of transubstantiation. There can e no sacrifice of Christ if there be no transubstantia-on : if the Divine Victim be not present, He cannot be fered. Inasmuch then as we have shown the one pinion to be untenable, the other falls to the ground. he sacrifice of the mass must be given up, when tran-abstantiation is abandoned.

By the tenacity with which the Roman Catholic clings o this supplementary article in his creed of the real esence, he adds to the difficulties and contradictions ver which his faith delights to triumph. For this acsifice is nothing that is seen ; this wondrous offering f the "body, soul, and Divinity" of our Lord makes no ppeal whatever to the senses ; no one can give or eceive any evidence whatever of the transaction said to e performed ; again we are plunged in the regions of nreality ; the sacrifice is without suffering and without eath ; the sacrifice is repeated every time a mass is elebrated ; Henry VII. directed ten thousand masses to e said for his soul ; masses, to the amount of hundreds f millions, have been celebrated : so many times, accord-ng to Catholic doctrine, has Christ's atonement been re-ew and made afresh. Such an enormous demand upon he self-abjuration of reason we might expect would be onnected with the citation of at least plausible texts of Scripture. But here the controversialist is obliged to rop his confident assertion of Bible authority ; he cannot

rejoice in the same bright colouring of argument with which he painted his former assertions and sophistries; his catalogue of proofs is short, and they are all indirect. He urges that in Malachi it is predicted, "incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering." This language, drawn from Jewish rites and therefore evidently applied to Christian services only in a figurative sense, is assumed without any critical proof whatever to mean the celebration of mass. Further, it is said Melchisedec met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and brought forth bread and wine, of course, as every common sense reader must see, for the patriarch's refreshment; but this the Roman Catholic transforms into an offering of these substances as a type of Christ's sacrifice. He maintains that this was the peculiarity of Melchisedec's priesthood, that he offered bread and wine instead of bulls and goats; and to this it is further affirmed the psalmist and the apostle Paul refer, when they declare "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." This is the chief Scripture argument alleged in support of the constant offering of a sacrifice in the mass; but one is at a loss to see how the popish conclusion follows from the Scriptural premises. Even supposing that Melchisedec did offer bread and wine sacrificially; and that Christ's office was to be like his in this respect, how can it be inferred that *therefore* Christ's body and blood would, throughout the Christian dispensation, be actually and constantly offered on the altar under the form of bread and wine? this is a sort of fallacy too transparent, we should have thought, to be very common. Only one other passage is quoted by Roman Catholics on the subject,—"*They*

ministered to the Lord," literally, they performed the service or worship of the Lord. What that can have to do with the repetition of the sacrifice of Christ one cannot tell; yet the passage has been translated, "while they were offering mass."

Such props, extremely slender in appearance even when set off by the utmost controversial artifice, and when on close examination to be intrinsically still more frail, are all which can be gathered out of Scripture in support of so immense a theory as that of the sacrifice of the mass. Yet, with singular hardihood, its advocates render it increasingly heavy and cumbrous by certain accessories, for which not even the shadow of a scriptural reason can be obtained. They are these—the repetition of the service in an unknown tongue; its asserted availableness on the ground of its solitary performance by the priest; its pretended efficacy for the benefit of the dead, as well as the living; and the necessity of repeating it over and over again, perhaps hundreds of times, for the rescue of one soul from purgatory. For these things, which, looked at in the light of New Testament teaching, are so utterly anti-Christian,—no interpretations of Scripture at all, however forced, can be assigned.

II. But to delay the final decision of the whole question no longer, St. Paul, as if Divinely guided to select expressions with relation to this very controversy, declares that Christ's sacrifice was made "once for all." Ten times he distinctly repeats this. He says, "Christ died not daily to offer up sacrifice," "for this he did once." "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place." "Nor yet that he should offer himself often,"

“for then must he often have suffered” (suffering and sacrifice being here identified, in opposition to the theory which separates them). “Now once, in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” “As it is appointed unto men once to die; so Christ was once offered.” “This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.” “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all.” Thus the apostle distinctly argues that Christ’s sacrifice needeth not to be repeated, while the papist says a repetition is necessary; Paul says it cannot be repeated, while the Roman Catholic says it can: Paul argues that it will not be repeated, while the Roman Catholic declares it has been. The apostle contradicts the Roman Catholic; the Roman Catholic contradicts the apostle. The Lord’s Supper is not a sacrifice; it only carries back our thoughts to the one perfected sacrifice. “Do this in remembrance of me:” not—repeat my sacrifice, offer me up again and again, renew my propitiation for sins; but do this simple thing “in remembrance of me.” “As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew (or declare) the Lord’s death till he come.” It is a commemoration of His sadness in the passover chamber, of His sorrow in the garden, of His agony and bloody sweat, of His cross and passion. It carries back the recollections of believers, over intervening centuries. There is Calvary, there is the cross, there is Christ; the one altar is there, the one Atonement there, the one Priest there; and the believer too is there. As if in the immediate vicinity of the spot, as if beside Christ’s holy mother, as if within hearing of His voice, he sees the

ounded body, the pierced feet, the outstretched arms, the pale countenance, the thorn-crowned temple, the eyes full of tears and love; and on and on he gazes, till the shadows of the miraculous eclipse wrap up the amazing spectacle, and the voice of the Divine Sufferer proclaims amidst nature's silence, "It is finished," the sacrifice is offered once for all.

"My soul looks back to see
The burdens Thou didst bear,
When suffering on the cursed tree,
And hopes her guilt was there!"

The virtue of that one offering endureth for ever. The streams of salvation which flowed from that smitten one are now as fresh as when they first gushed forth. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him." No sin-stained soul but may wash in the fountain of the atonement, and become white as the drifted snow. Some of the guiltiest of our race, Saul, Augustine, Bunyan, make application of faith to the one sacrifice; and lo their defilement disappears, they are transfigured into the image of their Lord, and their garments, washed in the Lamb's blood, become lustrous as the sun, pure, spotless, radiant, white so as no fuller on earth could white them. The one atonement makes them the pardoned children of God on earth, and at last carries them to heaven. There their memory rests on Him who was once offered; their hearts repose on Him who was once offered; they are filled with the love of Him who was once offered; their songs are full of the praises of Him who was once offered. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from

our sins in his blood, to him be glory and dominion for ever."

The Lord's Supper operates upon us by the appearance which it makes to our minds, by the lively symbols which it exhibits; by mementoes of His sacrifice; by signs of communion with Him and with one another; and by reviving and strengthening in our souls that faith which is the gift of God, and that love which is the fruit of the Spirit. Thus considered, it can be no barren service to a spiritual mind, but one of the most profitable in which we can engage. Precious in experience and remembrance are moments spent at the Lord's table. We often there and there get close to the throne of grace, close to the gate of heaven. Sweetly are the sentiments of the gracious soul at this feast,—which blends sadness and joy in so wonderful a manner,—expressed in the hymn we often sing at the close of the service:—

"When on Calvary I rest,
God in flesh made manifest
Shines in my Redeemer's face,
Full of beauty, truth, and grace.

Here I would for ever stay,
Weep and gaze my soul away;
Thou art heaven on earth to me,
Lovely, mournful Calvary."

To this solemnity we invite and urge all believers to come, in remembrance of the perfected offering. Love will prompt you to come; it will be even more ready and willing because the only reason for observance is your Lord's will. When with love's quick eye you read, "Do this in remembrance of me," with a consciousness of obligation you will run to obey, with cheerful feet you

I hasten to comply, and with reverent joy receive the precious memorial and bless the unseen Friend whose precious wishes you fulfil. Love will not tarry to ask the question, "Of what use is this appointment? can I do without it? May I not be a Christian, though I neglect a precept?" It is not the wont of love to ask, How can I do? as if spiritual good were a thing to be bought, and best to be had at the lowest price. Love does not learn her lessons in the world's mart, and, seeing how men drive hard bargains, go and try how she can open the treasures of salvation. The language of love is, "Show me anything that Christ asks, whether great or little, and I will do it." If then you love the Saviour, and value the one sacrifice, and venerate the precious and beautiful ordinance of the Lord's Supper, but have hitherto omitted the observance of it, let this summons witness your approach to the holy table and your union with Christ's family in the delightful celebration of His love whose name we bear. It will be making this season the opening of a new chapter in your history, placing you in visible connection with pilgrims, who, seated at His board, while His banner over them is love, chant His statutes as their song in the house of their pilgrimage. "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." But this appeal is made to those who desire spiritual union with Christ, according to the truth emphatically set down in the sixth chapter of John. "I am the bread of life; he that cometh unto me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. The bread that I give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in

him." Mysterious, most intimate and blessed union, leading to the enjoyment of benefits which had not entered into the heart of man to conceive, and which God has revealed by His Spirit. But he who delivers the promise utters the denunciation, "Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Without an inward and spiritual reception of Christ as an atoning Saviour, without Him dwelling in the heart by faith, we are separated from God, and in a state of spiritual death. To be without Christ here and hereafter, to go into eternity without Him, is a case of sin, calamity, and wretchedness, which the imagination can but feebly picture. To die in a state of separation from Him who overcame death and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers; to enter the grave, to pass into the invisible region of departed and separate souls, without the hope, consolation, and light which faith in Him affords; to face the king of terrors without the shield which He who is "the resurrection and the life" casts over His people; to be pierced by the poisoned dart of the enemy and fall overcome at his feet; to be transported to regions far from the presence of the Lamb who is the light and glory of the skies;—in short, to be denied and cast off by Christ in the hour of death and the day of judgment,—that is the last and greatest curse which a righteous God can send or a wicked man can know.

We fall back upon the words of the text, "we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all." You must be sanctified; you must be made holy; you must be solemnly consecrated to the service of God. And this you can be only through the mediation and

on of our blessed Lord. There is but one way is, even as there is but one way of pardon ; but of becoming meet for heaven, even as there is way of acquiring a title to heaven. The method of God is one ; the means appointed by Him what you are to do, in order to secure for yourselves blessings of redemption both as to justification and peace, is one—Believe. Spiritual life begins in faith, is preserved and perpetuated by faith, it is completed and perfected by faith. “This is the victory which hath overcome the world, even our faith.”

Then turn to God by faith in the one Mediator, the Son of God. You feel uneasy, anxious, distressed ; you feel that all is not right within,—that all is not right between you and God,—that you have no well-grounded confidence in heaven : your guilt bars you out, your sinful nature unfit you for the hallowed services of the upper world. Conscience tells you that it is so. Then what is the remedy but that you avail yourselves of the finished sacrifice ? If it were limited in its efficacy, if the offer of redemptive benefits were restricted to some—many and few—you might be disheartened. But it is “the Lamb of God taketh away the sins of the world.”

He “by the grace of God tasted death for every man.” No words can be plainer, no declaration can be more plain, no hope can have a deeper basis or a wider foundation. Draw nigh then, and enter in. Nothing can shut you out to the ark of salvation, to the heavenly Zion, to the presence of God, but faith in Jesus, faith productive of love, of holiness, of imitation, ever improving discipline, nothing shut you out but unbelief.

Christian Positivism.

BY REV. EDWIN JOHNSON, B.A.

“ I know whom I have believed.”—2 TIM. i. 12.

A CLEARNESS, a confidence, a certainty is expressed in these words that may well be coveted by us all. The man who can truly make them his own has his foot upon a rock. Amidst the uncertainties of speculation, amidst the changes of life, he cannot be moved. The man without a definite faith is weak and unprofitable, a well without water, a tree without fruit; there will be no weight in his words, nor vigour in his action. It is our business to influence others, and to bless by influencing; “ I believed, therefore have I spoken,” such is the position of the man who lives to diffuse a healthful influence in the minds of others. But the ever doubting, hesitant, half-hearted carry with them no such power. They chill instead of inspiring. Their vague and stammering utterances tend insidiously to weaken faith and foster doubt.

We are drawn irresistibly towards a man like St. Paul. Coming out of a sceptical world, it is good to be here. It is like catching a breath of “ the difficult air of the iced mountain tops,” after sojourning in the low and languid plain. It braces the nerves of the spirit. Whatever of true life there is within us becomes aglow with sympathy. We are stronger and better men than before. The world is always depressing us, because it reminds us constantly how vain and feeble we are, and can tell us nothing better than to trust to ourselves and rely upon ourselves. The word of God inspires us, because it throws us out of ourselves, and leads us to the true ground of reliance and support. It admits all our weakness, and all our helplessness, but only that it may assure us of strength in God and confidence in God.

us examine the state of mind expressed in the before us.

It is opposed to all negative belief.

There are many in the present day who will believe nothing, take nothing upon trust, with regard to the natural and spiritual world. They say,—We confine ourselves to what is properly speaking *known*, to what belongs to the range of sense, of experience, of observation, to what can be proved by ordinary rules of evidence and fact. Now the spiritual world comes under none of these conditions: the senses, observation, experience, positive science, history, can tell you nothing about it; that which hath not been seen, nor ear heard."

Therefore, say these men, the spiritual world is to us a *incognita*. Since we know nothing about it, we believe nothing about it; those who profess to have definite belief about the spiritual world are indulging in fancies, guesses, dreams, sweet and alleviatory of the sorrows of life it may be, but mere illusions after all!

For example, such men profess that they can entertain definite belief respecting God, a personal God. A personal God is the creation of man's intellectual want, a fiction. Man feels himself imperfect; he knows a little but he wants to know far more; the sum of his knowledge is but a grain beside the mountain of his ignorance: he conceives a Being who knows all that is known. Man thinks of his own weakness: he imagines a Being almighty. Man knows himself very imperfect, erring: he conceives a Being whose nature is absolutely without a flaw. So of every natural attribute. Where man is cabined, cribbed, bound on every side by the limitation of his own nature, he ascribes unlimitation, perfection, infinitude, to the Being.

What then? What proof is there here of such a Being?

You have only the creation of your own mind, an image, a shadow cast by your own imagination, this and nothing more.

These men cannot believe in miracles; they say "no

miracle has ever been proved." They do not believe that Jesus is a supernatural Personage, the Son of God with power. They cannot believe that an atonement has been made by Him for the sin of man ; nor that we have "infallible proofs" of His resurrection. It follows, they can believe nothing as to great purposes supposed to guide the government of the world ; nothing of beneficent design, running as a golden thread through the sad-coloured web of human life, having its outcome from the mind of a living, loving, overruling, personal God.

They point you to the pain and suffering of the whole creation, and ask, Where is now your God ? What becomes of your talk about goodness, unmixed goodness, as the ruling impulse in the government of the world ? They point you to some couch of dreadful bodily misery, the fruit of disease whose seeds have been borne about from infancy, robbing life of power and joy ; or to the corpse of some brave youth, smitten to the earth by some sudden casualty. Where is the great and good God of yours, all whose works praise Him ? To us these things speak only of doubt, dismay, despair.

I care not to meet these arguments in this place ; I do not believe the pulpit to be the proper place for any formal controversy. I merely point out the singular contrast to all this in the text. Says St. Paul, "I know whom I have believed." Here is the deliberate expression of the deepest conviction of a man's soul. Supposing that we can adopt it, what will it mean for us each one ? This : that there is a personal God who has created the world and upholds it with mighty power and wisdom, and all for best and most gracious ends ; that there is a Christ, the Son of God, the sacrifice for sin, the Saviour of the world ; that there is an atonement, a resurrection, a life beyond the tomb.

We are not insensible to the mysteries of being ; but we remember that we see but in part, and know but in part. We are not untouched by the presence of suffering ; but we know that He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve

ren of men but for their profit. We can say, with blinding tears, He hath done all things well. A very little ; yet this is enough, to know whom we believed. There can be no mistake there ; let God

“ We will abide in thy tabernacle for ever ; make refuge under the shadow of thy wings.”

is opposed to the spirit of self-reliance.

result of such teaching as that to which we have alluding will be to lead men to look to themselves.

be no God, no Saviour, no atonement, what but for us to save ourselves ? We must be striving ; we must be brave and pure. We rely on our own integrity. We must not give up the hope of life, but acquit ourselves heroically under

We must be sustained by the proud consciousness of our bosoms that we are doing our best, that we are putting ourselves as well as we may on the stage of affairs, though we shall soon have to bow our heads in eternal darkness. We must find comfort in our own union, and help from without there is none. As the poet says :—

“ Once read thy own breast aright,
And thou hast done with fears !
Man gets no other light,
Search he a thousand years.
Sink in thyself : there ask
What ails thee, at that shrine !”

He commends this as the gospel of self-sufficiency—“ an evangel not to be cancelled or supplanted by any revelation of mystic, prophet, or saint.” Man, according to this doctrine, must stand “ alone, self-reliant.”

Brethren, what new gospel is this, which is this ? What good news is there in telling me, that, being in a world of mystery, the memory of my sins and the consciousness of present infirmity lying upon me, that all I need is to be self-reliant, self-respecting, self-respecting ? It is mockery ; what I crave is to be freed from myself, to be taken out of my sinful

estate by the arm of a deliverer. Infinite ourselves, we can be satisfied with nothing less than infinite fulness. Apart from that, to be much looking within can lead to nothing but intense dissatisfaction.

This mood of self-sufficiency is surely opposed to all gentleness, sweetness, and humility of temper; it must nourish pride and self-love. It requires the observance of a standard too lofty for any man; one can think of nothing more likely to render the life of a really sincere and earnest man barren and miserable.

Mark the contrast of the text, "I know *whom* I have believed." This at once carries us out of self into God. No longer is it we, all in all to ourselves, but He all in all to us. "Whom have we in heaven but thee," etc.?

This belief assures me of salvation, of an interest in the merits of my Divine Redeemer. The reference of the apostle is doubtless specially to Him: I know that He is the Lord my righteousness, that He has cancelled my debts, that His obedience was accepted instead of mine, His person in the sacrifice of Calvary instead of mine. He himself becomes mine in the act of faith, and I can do all things through Him who strengtheneth me. I live no longer unto myself, but unto Him.

It assures me of Divine protection. I know that I am not going out of life into a boundless dark unknown, but to be "with Christ." He has promised, and His every word I trust, that none of His shall perish. My trust for life, for death, for time, and for eternity, is in the Divine Saviour who is "able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." "I know whom I have believed."

III. It is opposed to all vague belief.

'There are many who would say,—I believe in Jesus the Son of God, the Divine Saviour; but who repeat the words more as a dry and vague statement than as a deep-felt heart experience of their own. You may not be infidel, nor sceptic; and yet you may not on the other hand possess the definite faith of the text. You do not

think of Christ as a long known and familiar Friend ; you have heard of Him as though in a dream ; you have not yet seen Him, nor taken hold upon Him with the hand of faith ; you have not learnt the tones of the Good Shepherd's voice, calling you by name ; He may be to you a name and little more.

Now to the apostle Jesus Christ was an undoubted, a most intense reality. He had heard His voice speaking from the sky ; he had seen Him in vision ; he had obeyed His summons ; and Jesus was now with him, his Friend and Master, directing all his labours, sustaining him under all his sufferings ; his present consolation, his future hope, his life, his aim, his all. There is a depth of earnest unutterable feeling in the words of the text.

It is the end and aim of our preaching to lead you to this deep, living, personal trust in God your Saviour. You may have it as well as the apostle. You have in many respects the advantage over him ; you have the accumulated evidence of centuries of Christian thought and experience. He is preached on every hand. You have the words of Jesus, and the promise of the Spirit of Truth. You have the aid of devout and spiritual books. You see living testimonies around you to the power of faith in Christ. While others are gloomy, doubting, depressed, believers are cheerful and serene because they know whom they have believed.

Seek then this faith. Look unto Christ. Seek Him : let your cry be, We would see Jesus ; and He will be found of you. He is with His Church alway, even unto the end of the world. And having found Him, you will have a centre of unshaken peace and confidence in the world. No philosophy, falsely so called, will weaken your trust. Neither life nor death, things present nor things to come, will be able to separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*Introduction**Minist***Div. IV. *Second Jour***

Sec. I. **11 And the Pharisee**
Demand of **with Him, seeking of**
a Sign.

Div. IV. (Chap. viii. 11—i: begins with an account of wh from Galilee; and then, as the in the country of the Gentiles. details and significance; the ac of the apostles, is related; and His death and resurrection, wit does not conclude, as the two Galilee; but it is separated fro which nothing is related, and di

Sec. I. (Mark viii. 11-21; Galilee, the Pharisees resumed from heaven; as on a previous 38), and at a later time menti would be often repeated; for miracles of Jesus 4-57.

n to proof. ¹² And sighing deeply in His spirit He
I, Why do such persons still seek a sign? Assuredly
eclare unto you, a sign shall not be given to such
sons. ¹³ And leaving them He embarked again in a
t, and went away to the other side.

And they forgot to take loaves, and they had not

a two parties, and, not considering what they had seen in their Lord,
supposed the warning was against some secret malicious design.

St. Matthew here, for the first time, connects the Sadducees with the
isees in their opposition to Jesus.

The Hebraistic form of denial, which is here used, arose from a form of
ring, and was extended to other solemn declarations (Heb. iii. 11; iv.

The reply is more fully given by St. Matthew, who notices the reference
e signs of the weather, which is similar to that given by St. Luke on
her occasion (xii. 54); and also the reference to the *preaching* of Jonah.

term which denotes all the people living at one time also denotes those
imilar character (Matt. xvii. 17; Mark ix. 19; Luke ix. 41; xvi. 8;

- ii. 15; Deut. xxxii. 5; Ps. xiv. 5; xxiv. 6; lxxviii. 8). Jesus never
ired faith, or belief, without proper evidence. The Pharisees were

ured for seeking *further* proof, when sufficient had been presented;
for demanding a *kind* of evidence which they had no right to expect,

ome celestial wonder, or sign in the sky. The term used for their
ing denotes *addition* to what was already possessed. The truthfulness,

evolence, uprightness, and piety, which were shown in all the words and
ions of Jesus,—and the works of healing, which He did in the Father's

ne,—these were appealed to by Him, as the proper reason for the faith
ich He required (John v. 36; viii. 18; xiv. 11). They who recognised

ese evidences would trust in Him, that they might rise through Him to
uth and love and all righteousness. The conviction which might be

duced by mere material signs would have little moral worth. Such signs
re given; but not alone, nor in the first place, nor as the chief evidence.

orks of superhuman *power* might be reasonably expected, as accompani-
ants of other manifestations of the Divine presence; but they had no

periority as evidence, and were inferior to other evidences as means of
oral and religious improvement. The sign from heaven, which was de-

unded, would not be given to any. And the signs which would be given to
se who had faith would not be given to those who had none, and who

re without faith, because they would not consider the sufficient evidence
eady presented to them.

but one loaf with them in the boat. ¹⁵ And He cautioned them saying, See you, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. ¹⁶ And they reasoned with one another saying, It is because we have not loaves. ¹⁷ And Jesus knowing this, said to them, Why are you reasoning because you have not loaves? Do you not yet understand, nor consider? Have you your mind still slow to perceive? ¹⁸ Having eyes, do you not see? and having ears, do you not hear? and do you not remember? ¹⁹ When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you

¹⁴ The forgetfulness of the disciples was before their embarking; the warning addressed to them was on their arrival at the opposite shore.

¹⁵ The leaven of Herod was that of the Herodians, one of the parties opposed to Jesus, who are by St. Matthew described as Sadducees. The Herodians were a political party, the Sadducees a religious party; and many of the former belonged also to the latter. The king adopted the principle of his party, though he did not support all their practices; and the reference to the principle, as *his*, marks its irreligious character. The leaven of the Pharisees here referred to is declared to be their *teaching*, Matt. xvi. 12, which in part agreed with that of the Sadducees, and in part was different. The purpose of both was the same, but their principles were dissimilar. The Pharisees, cleaving to all that was Jewish, would object to the miracles of Jesus, that they were less than those of Moses. The Herodians and Sadducees, supporting the Roman government, would object that the kingdom of heaven, of which Jesus spoke, could not compete in power and grandeur with the empire which ruled the world. Both demanded more signs; and they came by different ways to the same conclusion, that He should be rejected and put to death. On another occasion the *leaven* of the Pharisees represents, not their teaching, but their *hypocrisy*; and all are admonished that such concealment cannot last (Luke xii. 1). Leaven, on account of its diffusiveness, is a symbol of moral good, or evil, of any kind; and generally it is used for the latter.

¹⁹ St. Matthew does not give these two questions and answers, but combines the reference to the two miracles by the question, Do you not remember? The agreement of the reports in *substance* is perfect; and the difference in *form* is valuable, showing independence.

up? They say to Him, Twelve. ²⁰ And when the men for the four thousand, the fillings of how many fragments did you take up? And they said, seven. ²¹ And He said to them, How is it that you do not consider?

And He came to Bethsaida; and they brought to Him a blind man, and besought Him that He would heal him. See Blind healed

What they had experienced, if considered aright, would have prevented carelessness respecting food, and any apprehension of the possibility of deadly poison; and thus, precluding the literal interpretation, would have led to a right understanding of the admonition. Many of the mistakes of the apostles resulted from their taking the rule, which has been most properly commended, of preferring the *literal* interpretation to the *allegative*.

Scriptural evidence is most proper and profitable for religious truth.

Further proof is desired, when higher is disregarded and despised.

Truth and feeling are much affected by personal associations.

Forgetfulness of the past occasions needless anxiety for the future.

NO. II. (Chap. viii. 22-26.) This is the second miracle related only by St. Mark, and in many particulars it is similar to the first. In both there is a withdrawal from the crowd, the use of means to awaken faith, and the production of publicity. Journeying northward on the eastern side of the lake, Jesus came to Bethsaida, and a blind man was brought to Him to be healed the usual way. But Jesus took him out of the town, put spittle on his eyes, and laid His hands on them, and then asked the blind man if he could see. The cure was not complete, the faith of the blind man being probably imperfect. This would be increased by the partial restoration of sight; and when Jesus again touched his eyes, their sight was restored perfectly. The blind man was sent to his home, and told not to publish the miracle in Bethsaida. As in the former case, the afflicted person did not

touch him. ²³ And taking hold of the hand of the blind man, He led him forth outside the village : and having spat into his eyes, putting His hands upon him, He questioned him, If he beheld anything. ²⁴ And looking up he said, I behold the men, for I see them, as trees, walking about. ²⁵ Then again He put His hands upon his eyes, and made him look up : and he was restored, and saw them all clearly. ²⁶ And He sent him away to his home, saying, Do not go into the village, nor speak to any in the village.

10. III. ²⁷ And Jesus went forth, and His disciples, unto the villages of Cæsarea Philippi. And on the road He

come with faith, but was brought by others ; and both seem to have been exceptional miracles, for Gentiles. As such they have peculiar symbolical significance. The persons healed were brought to Jesus by the ministry of men ; their faith was produced by the expression of His love ; the benefits they received belonged especially to the mind ; the cures were not effected instantaneously ; what was corporeal was for a few, what was spiritual was for all.

²³ This Bethsaida is called a *town* by St. Luke (ix. 10), as Bethsaida of Galilee is by St. John (i. 45). Josephus states that it was raised from being a village to the dignity of a town, by Herod Philip (Ant. xviii. 2).

²⁴ All these actions, being expressions of kindness which a blind man could understand, tended to awaken confidence. The application of spittle, which has some medicinal value, was a promise of restored sight, though in the cases described it could have no curative power.

²⁴ The common text is that of few MSS. of any authority. The objects seen were distinguished from trees, and known to be men, by their movement.

The knowledge of Christ awakens faith in those who are brought to Him by the faith of others.

Benefits are received according to the measure of faith in Him.

questioned His disciples, saying to them, Whom do men declare Me to be? ²⁸ Then they answered, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but others, One of the prophets. ²⁹ And He said to them, But whom do you declare Me to be? Then Peter answering said to Him, Thou art the Christ. ³⁰ And He charged them, that

SEC. III. (Mark viii. 27-30; Matt. xvi. 13-20; Luke ix. 18-21.) The narrative of St. Luke now again coincides with the others. Jesus continued journeying northward, and came to the neighbourhood of one of the chief cities of Syria. Here, at a distance from adversaries and from the multitudes who followed in Galilee, in reply to questions proposed, He received from the apostles their acknowledgment that He was the Christ; but to prevent their supposing that this was now to be proclaimed everywhere by them, He directed them, for the present, to abstain from any verbal declaration of this truth.

²⁷ This Cæsarea is distinguished from that on the Mediterranean (Acts viii. 40). It had been called Paneas, and was the capital of a country which Augustus added to the dominions of Herod. (Jos. Ant. xv. 10.) St. Luke states that Jesus had been praying, and was alone with the disciples.

²⁸ The opinions are similar to those before recorded (vi. 14). St. Matthew adds the name of Jeremiah; and St. Luke, as before, mentions the ancient prophets. Information was not needed by Jesus; but it was an advantage to the apostles that their acknowledgment should be made, with a distinct apprehension of its difference from common judgments. They are therefore brought into contrast.

²⁹ The expression here given is equivalent to that of St. Luke, *The Christ of God*; and to that of St. Matthew, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God*. St. Matthew relates also the commendation of St. Peter, with the statement that his knowledge was received, not from man, but from God; the prediction respecting the eternal life of the Church; and the declaration of the administrative authority of the apostles. Not Peter only, or the apostles, but all true disciples, were taught by God (John vi. 45). The knowledge came from God, and was therefore certain; but it came through the words and actions of Jesus, and with the exercise of human reason, quickened by the Divine Spirit. The acknowledgment now made is the same that was made from the beginning (John i. 34, 42, 46, 50; iv. 26, 42; vi. 69; Matt. iii. 17; viii. 29; ix. 27; xi. 2, 27; Mark i. 11; iii. 11; v. 7; Luke i. 32; ii. 11, 26; iv. 18; xxii. 69, 70).

³⁰ The verbal statement that Jesus was the Messiah would generally be

they should make to no one a declaration respecting Him.

c. IV.
Pre-
m of
h.

³¹ And He began to teach them, that it was needful for the Son of Man to suffer much, and to be rejected by

understood according to erroneous popular expectations, and would therefore be injurious. It would not be so when, by His death, all hopes of an earthly kingdom were destroyed. Only with a knowledge of His character would the statement at any time be beneficial; and from this it would receive the best and surest confirmation.

[It is quite impossible that at this time, or at any time, Jesus should have been unwilling that men should regard Him truly as the Christ. This was declared of Him, and by Him, from the beginning of His public ministry. What was forbidden was a verbal statement of this truth, when such a declaration would be injurious rather than beneficial. Jesus was the Christ, as described by the prophets, but not as their predictions were understood by the people. The statement would therefore mislead those who received it, and increase the hostility of those who rejected it. Only by the manifestation of Himself could the false views of the Christ be corrected; and the proclamation of His name, apart from the knowledge of His character, for religious purposes was unprofitable, for political purposes injurious. At a later period, the declaration that He was the Christ was permitted and encouraged, and it contributed to the political excitement, favourable and adverse, which occasioned His death. Another reason for this prohibition may be found in the consideration that Jesus and the apostles were now among the Gentiles, and that such an acknowledgment of Him as they might be ready to give would more properly follow His full manifestation to the Jewish people, when He was by some rejected, and by others received as the Messiah.]

The true Messiah was very different from the hopes and expectations of the Jews.

He was acknowledged by those who knew Him best, they being taught of God.

Verbal declarations of the truth are not always desirable.

SEC. IV. (Mark viii. 31—ix. 1; Matt xvi. 21—28; Luke ix. 21—27.) Having received from the disciples the solemn declaration of the conviction, which had long existed in their minds, and had lately been confirmed by extraordinary signs, Jesus now taught them what was included in the

elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes; and He killed; and after three days to rise again. ³² And He spoke the statement plainly.

And Peter taking Him began to rebuke Him. ³³ But

acknowledgment that He was the Christ. For the first time He told them exactly that, contrary to all their plans and expectations, He should be killed and crucified. He reproved Peter for his opposition to such anticipations. He then required of all disciples,—of all who would be His,—that they should be willing, in the path of duty, to follow Him even to death; saying that the course which seemed to be imprudent was the only prudent course; the loss of life in His service becoming gain, and His approval a compensation for the censure of the world. Lastly, He intimated to His disciples that, though for Himself an early death was needful, it was not for them; but they would live to see the establishment of the kingdom of God.

The death of the Messiah was supposed to be contrary to the prophecies of the Old Testament; but it was really required by them. To this necessity, however, is made first, as in similar statements; the testimony of the Scriptures being all the indications that the highest service of God was attended with much suffering, as well as the predictions which referred exclusively to the Redeemer. The fulfilment of prophecy, which declared the Divine purpose, could not be its reason. If we inquire, why the death of the Christ was appointed? we are taught that it *became* Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all, in bringing many sons unto glory, to give to our Leader and Saviour a perfection through suffering (Heb. ii. 10). *Living alone* cannot be profitable to men, or pleasing to God; but the *truth and love*, thereby exercised and expressed, are most advantageous to men, and acceptable to God. The sanhedrim, the supreme national council, consisted of these three classes:—the high-priest, with the leaders of twenty-four courses; the chief legal authorities; and other elders selected from inferior courts. Their rejection of Jesus was similar to a similar rejection, by the Jewish rulers, of a Divinely appointed deliverer of the people. (Ps. cxviii. 22.) The expression “after three days” might mean, either after the whole of three days, or after a part, according to common usage. In the other reports the expression is more definite, *on the third day*; and so it is related by St. Mark, in his report of the second and third predictions (ix. 31; x. 34).

The previous statements, respecting this subject, made by our Lord were expressed in figurative language: John ii. 19; iii. 14; vi. 51.

The terms for Satan and Devil are used as common nouns. The words

He turning round, and seeing His disciples, rebuked Peter, saying, Go away behind Me, adversary; because thou mindest not what is of God, but what is of men.

³⁴ And calling to the multitude, with His disciples, He said to them, Whoever is willing to follow after Me, let him renounce himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever determines to save his life, will cast it away: but whoever shall cast away his own life, on account of Me and the Good message, he will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit a man, if he should

of Jesus were spoken to the apostle; and it need not be supposed, that a proper name was applied to him, which would represent him as entirely evil. St. Matthew gives the passionate exclamation of St. Peter, *Mercy for Thee, Lord: this cannot be for Thee*. And he adds the title which was given to the apostle, in opposition to that which he had just received. He was a stone for the foundation of the Church, as he had faith in Christ; he became, by his opposition, a stone of stumbling. His conduct shows that his acknowledgment of Jesus, as the Son of God, was not of the highest character. He looked to that which human judgment and affection would show to be desirable and requisite for an earthly kingdom; and did not regard the indications, which Scripture and the teaching of Jesus had given, that the service of suffering was good for men, and the appointed means for establishing the kingdom of heaven. The minding, or seeking, what belongs to the lower nature of man, is opposed to the minding that which belongs to the Spirit of God. (Rom. viii. 7.) Satan is used as a common noun, 1 Kings xi. 14; and the name for the Devil, its Greek equivalent, is used Rev. xii. 9, 1 Tim. iii. 11, 2 Tim. iii. 3, Tit. ii. 8.

³⁴ All who would follow Him must be willing, in faith and love, to submit, as He did, to shame and suffering. St. Luke gives the full expression, *take up his cross daily*. By the apostles the sufferings of the disciples are, in the same way, associated with those of Christ (Rom. vi. 5; viii. 17; Phil. iii. 10; Col. i. 24; 2 Tim. ii. 11; Heb. xii. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 1, 13; 1 John iii. 16).

³⁵ The same term is used for the *lower life*, which is human, earthly, and transient; and for the *higher life*, which is Divine, heavenly, and eternal. The preservation of the one may be the loss of the other.

³⁶ Proverbial sayings, expressing the judgment of men respecting the value

the whole world, and lose his life? ³⁷ Or what will
 an give in exchange for his life? ³⁸ For whoever
 vrows Me, and My words, among this apostate and
 ed people; the Son of Man will also disavow him,
 n He comes in the glory of His Father, with the holy
 els.

And He said to them, Assuredly I declare to you,
 there are some of those standing here, who will not

e lower life, suggest and support the true judgment respecting the
 r life. "All that a man hath will he give for his life" (Job ii. 4): what
 dily given up for the lower life, when needful, should be more readily
 uished for the higher.

The description of the character of the people corresponds to the figura-
 language of the Old Testament; national apostasy being called adul-
 (Matt. xii. 39; Ezek. xvi. 38; xxiii. 45; Hos. i. 2; ii. 2.) The dis-
 al of Christ, by word or deed, might result from shame, or any
 preference of the judgment of the world to the judgment of Jesus.
 World regarded Him as mean, feeble, and false,—a religious impostor.
 aimed to possess truth, power, and dignity—not less than Divine.
 quired of all disciples, that they should acknowledge Him to be the
 t,—the Son of God, the Lord and Saviour of men,—notwithstanding the
 less of His condition and conduct. He would subdue, and save, all
 us, by truth, and love, and righteousness, and faith in God; and these
 ual riches were to be chosen by them, as their best possession, and to
 cepted by them, as the appointed means for overcoming all evil and
 lishing for ever the kingdom of God and His Anointed.

This verse should not be separated from the preceding statements, for it
 gs to them, and not to the following narrative. The kingdom of God is
 sented as coming with power, after the ascension of Christ; and then
 as manifested to those who became His. (Acts i. 8; ii. 33, 47; iv. 33;
 ; Heb. ii. 4.) Another coming is mentioned by Himself, when He was
 fested also to adversaries. (Mark xiii. 26; Matt. x. 23; xxiv. 30.) The
 progress of the Church, and the overthrow of Judaism, were witnessed
 any who heard these words. They do not apply to the transfiguration
 us: for that was not a coming of the *kingdom* of God, nor a manifesta-
 of power; and none would need to be solemnly assured, that they would
 or another week.

meet with death, until they have seen the kingdom God come with power.

There is a time to withhold, and a time to impart knowledge.

His death and resurrection were foreseen by Christ, but not by the disciples.

Suffering and death are not good, to human apprehensions.

They are a Divine appointment, and a useful service.

Outward gain may be real loss, and outward loss the highest gain.

The approval of Christ is better than the honour of the world.

“MYTHOLOGY, which was the bane of the ancient world, is in truth a disease of language. A myth means a word, but a word which, from being a name or an attribute, has been allowed to assume a more substantial existence. Most of the Greek, the Roman, the Indian, and other heathen gods are nothing but poetical names, which were gradually allowed to assume a divine personality never contemplated by their original inventors. *Eos* was a name of the dawn, before she became a goddess. *Zeus* originally meant the bright heaven; and many of the stories told of him as the supreme god had a meaning only as told originally of the bright heaven, whose rays, like golden rain, descend on the lap of the earth . . . And *Pyrrha*, the Eve of the Greeks, was nothing but a name of the red earth, and in particular of Thessaly. This mythological disease, though less virulent in modern languages, is by no means extinct.”—MAX MÜLLER’S “*Science of Language*.”

Foreign Pulpit.

THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING.

BY M. LE PASTEUR E. DE PRESSENSÉ, PH. D.

(TRANSLATED BY REV. R. S. ASHTON, B.A.)

CHAPTER VI.

Compassion.

“Weep with those that weep.”—Rom. xii. 15.

There is another kind of suffering, not less noble and not less holy than that of martyrdom, namely compassion. We can be more disinterested or more generous; for it takes us wholly out of ourselves, and brings us into rough association with the sufferings of our brethren. It is the outcome of all that is purest in the Christian's life, of the Divine love which lives by self-denial. There is no virtue more Divine than that of compassion, for by it we achieve the nearest approach to the character of the Redeemer. *Compassio est passio*, “Compassion is a passion,” said Origen with profound truth. Perfect love in Jesus involved infinite suffering, because He thoroughly identified Himself with all the disgrace and sorrows of humanity. The more we love, the more shall we feel the deep sympathy which unites us with all that suffer. Suffering at this elevation is a pure flame, bearing to heaven the holiest incense of earth. On the other hand, wherever this Divine pity is absent the altar is extinguished and the Spirit of Christ has disappeared. A Church which does not love those who are sinking downward to ruin, which cannot weep over human misery, whose only care is for itself and its privileges, is not a Church; for it resembles its Head in nothing but the name, and it bears His name only to dishonour

May I be able to convince you that no Christian

grace should be more eagerly sought after than this broad and expansive love, which is inseparable from deep sorrow.

Let us, first of all, clearly understand *what compassion is*. Let us not confound it with a merely natural pity, with a sensibility which is easily aroused but still more easily comforted. All know what it is to feel a painful shock when brought into contact with some great suffering; there are scenes of destitution and despair which call forth tears from the most selfish: but this is a sensation rather than a sentiment, an excitement of the nerves or of the most superficial part of the soul, a passing excitement which does not survive the immediate cause which produced it, and from which recovery is very speedy when help is promptly given or a kind word is spoken. It may be a purely passive emotion. As in still water the reflection of a stormy sky follows that of a clear one, so the misfortune of others is reflected in our souls but in the same way as the passing cloud; these tears of instinctive pity dry up very quickly. Do not let us deceive ourselves; the world does not like sufferers, it does not like to weep with those who weep, it turns away from such, it creates a solitude around them, except in the case of some illustrious mourner whom it desires to flatter or court. It is perfectly true that in the present day much incense has been offered to suffering, but always on condition that it presents itself like René in magnificent mourning apparel, and that with Byron and Musset it sheds eloquent tears. In fact, the unfortunate are in the world's estimation like beggars; they are sources of trouble and annoyance. The usages of society do not permit us to dwell on the terrible reality of suffering: as a matter of good taste, it must be passed by in silence; it must be avoided like a contagious disease, and our duty in regard to it is thought to be discharged by a few commonplaces of sympathy. You know what they are worth, you who have been stricken amid the whirl of fashionable life; you know in what a

terrible solitude you have found yourselves, irritated and exasperated by a polite insensibility, and nowhere discovering a heart that really bled for your wound.

Christian compassion rises as far above instinctive pity as Christianity rises above the world. It is not the effect of a natural sensibility; no, it has that stamp of the extraordinary which is the very impress of Christianity. To exercise compassion is, as the word signifies, to render the affliction of another one's own, to enter fully into it, to feel it as he feels it, to bear his burden with him, to bend beneath his cross, to be desolate as he is desolate, to be distressed with him. True love is far-reaching, like the love of God, embracing all sufferers, penetrating like His to the very depths of grief; it shares in its duration, for it neither grows weary nor vanishes like a passing emotion of the soul.

Compassion has a double effect: on the one hand it takes us out of ourselves, and makes us partakers of all that is most affecting in Divine mercy; it thus becomes the superior form of piety. On the other hand it imparts to us the greatest moral power for doing good to man, it opens our hearts, and we may regard it as the most effective method of conveying truth; it melts the thickest ice, and triumphs over the most inveterate prejudices. He who really weeps with those that weep displays in his sympathy a really persuasive eloquence. A comforter who has no tears of compassion is simply an unbearable talker; but he who has truly suffered from the ills which he desires to alleviate speaks in inimitable tones; the miserable listen to him with eagerness, they feel themselves loved; and once more afflicted ones, attracted by the secret charm, are seen following close after him wheresoever he leads them: happy are they, for they are led to the feet of Christ. Compassion therefore combines the most excellent graces. Let us earnestly promote its growth in ourselves; and, in order to this, let our eyes be fixed on the High-priest whose mercy was infinite; let us traverse along with and after Him the

circles of human suffering in which we are called to exercise the loving ministry of consolation.

Compassion deems no kind of distress beneath her notice. There are sufferings of an inferior order, affecting more especially our frail bodies which are so soon to return to the dust. Let us beware of disdaining such, because we pretend to a more exalted and spiritual piety. Let us remember the day when Jesus Christ, surrounded with innumerable multitudes who had followed Him into the wilderness and listened to Him for many hours, "was moved with compassion towards them, because they were hungry." He not only had pity on the poor man; He also placed Himself at his side and identified Himself with him, that He might more thoroughly help and raise him. Be sure of this, that if Jesus had not begun by showing compassion towards human privations and distresses He would not have had a single hearer, even though He should have displayed all the treasures of His consolation for higher sorrows. The poor man felt that he was understood by the Saviour, that he had His tenderest sympathy; and so he confided in Him, after being often so discouraged, rejected, and spurned by others. He will not return to the Christian Church till He find the same sentiments prevailing in it. We also are surrounded by a great and hungry multitude; it is massed together in our cities, it is thrust in between the bare walls of the most wretched abodes, its life is one of privation and anguish, with no security for the morrow, hardly earning a meagre livelihood, and ever exposed to lose even this. The gulf of poverty has been opened before the eyes of our terrified generation, and the cry of distress rising from it has made the most indifferent turn pale. The useless palliatives of a powerless or chimerical empiricism have only enabled us to measure its depths. Do you know the best means of filling it up? Descend boldly into it with Christian compassion; rise above a mere passing pity, and learn what poverty is by sharing in its sufferings. A man of real heart has shown us, in

a book of eloquent simplicity,* what in our advanced civilisation is the most ordinary condition of woman among the labouring classes, in the manufactory, the workshop, or in the solitary labour of the garret; he has shown us what in her case the life of the family and of the heart has become in the midst of the privations, the feverish activity, and the cruel necessities which leave no time for lighting the fire on the domestic hearth or keeping up the pure flame of the home affections. Christian women who have read those pages, respected wives, happy mothers, who have time to love and enjoy all the delights of home, have your hearts been pierced as with a sword as you have reflected on this state of things? Have you felt compassion? In other words, have you associated yourselves with the sad condition of your sisters? Has it seemed to you that it was yourselves, yourselves in person, who had to earn your bread at this cost, to start off before daylight and leave your children behind you, to enter the vast workshops of luxury, where all your womanly feelings would be wounded, to return by-and-by to a cold and dull abode where weariness leaves no room for the sweet exchange of sentiment. Has it seemed to you that it was yourselves, you in person, who under the pressure of want had to work on wearily through the night, in order to gain a few pence in return for so many hours of toil?

Observe that I have thus far spoken only of ordinary circumstances in the career of the poor woman. What should we find it to be in what she calls hard times, when work fails, and the workshop is closed, and temptations assail her? Oh! if we had Jesus Christ's bowels of compassion, how great our anguish would be! We should not be able to endure the thought of these

* M. Jules Simon, in his work entitled, "The Workwoman," "*L'Ouvrière*." This discourse was delivered shortly after the appearance of the work, which still claims the attention of the philanthropist.

hungry multitudes, who in consequence of their hunger are so often led to ruin their souls ; for that is one of the most frightful features of our civilization. The debauchery of the well-to-do classes has taken hunger into its service, for the purpose of keeping up the number of its victims. Who therefore can pretend that we live in a world where everything is in order? There is a God above who beholds these things ; and all these souls, treated with contempt by a world that has bought them only to pollute them, will be required of those on whom the responsibility rests. But in fact, these horrible deeds are being perpetrated, they are increasing close to our very doors, and yet we Christians remain quite at ease ! And so we shall remain until we feel the burning compassion that is at present quite a stranger to our base and cowardly hearts ; but from the day when we sally forth from our abodes, where everything smiles upon us, and get into contact with these terrible sufferings,—from the day when we feel them intensely, when this frightful burden weighs us down,—then in spite of every difficulty, in spite of the astonishment and mockery we may excite, we shall do something extraordinary in the matter of charity ; we shall go and seek all who are lost. Men will say of us, “ What ! they keep company with publicans ; fallen women have been seen with them.” But on that very day publicans and fallen women will discover the road to heaven. On that very day Christianity will reappear in our midst, and we shall recognise it by this sign, it will search in the dust and mud for the missing drachma, the immortal but polluted and degraded soul, the jewel of the Lord trodden under the foot by the passer-by. On that very day the sick, the blind, the paralysed will find again their best Friend. On that very day we shall perform miracles, miracles of love ; then it will be seen what resources for sufferers were treasured up and hidden in our houses ; by our liberality we shall multiply our loaves, we shall pour balm into every wound, and the most soothing balm will be found to consist in

our tears of compassion. If therefore you ask what is to be done, in order to effect these great changes, and to follow the example given us at this hour by evangelical England, which has overcome all prejudices and descended into the lowest depths of physical and moral misery,—if you ask me what is to be done to imitate the few Christian souls amongst us who have followed this impulse but without as yet imparting it to us,—I should say to you, “Weep with those that weep.” Put yourselves in their position, and suffer what they suffer, remembering that if faith is a lively representation of the glorious realities which are on high, love is first of all a lively representation of the sad and miserable realities which are here below.

There is a special reason for the development of a practical charity which pours oil and wine into our social wounds. It is thus that the condition of the pauper has become one of the principal subjects of study in our day. To their honour we must admit that social questions have their noble side of generosity and brotherhood. Woe to the Church, if it should allow itself to be distanced in the path which its great Head has opened up before it! It would very properly lose all claim to be heard. When a religion falls below the level of the general conscience of the day, it is ruined. When paganism was decaying, there came a moment in which man felt himself to be greater and better than his gods, and then it was he exclaimed, “The gods are departing.” Jupiter was nothing better than a worm-eaten idol, from the day when his former worshipper caught a glimpse of an ideal superior to the worship of the past. I am well aware that Christianity in itself will always far outstrip all our aspirations; but its unworthy representatives may degrade it, this or that Church may fall below the general conscience. Now this is what would most certainly happen if we allowed our minds to become indifferent to the sorrows of poverty whilst other minds are regarding them with such deep interest. Let us understand the

signs of the times. Let us say to ourselves that our ecclesiastical establishments will be regarded with pity if they do not become a safe refuge for all kinds of misery, if we are not at the head of the noble philanthropic movement which is going on in every direction. You claim, we shall be told, to have acquired at the feet of Christ an almost supernatural love for suffering humanity; give us then such a proof of this as shall in itself be supernatural: if you do not, we shall not believe you, and we shall reckon you among the theorizers about love who simply say to the poor, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled." True, the gospel has not left to others the work of chastising the inconsistencies of pretentious Christians; the terrible irony which I have just recalled was uttered against them by St. James eighteen centuries ago.

If Jesus Christ felt compassion for physical suffering, He had no less pity for the *sufferings of the heart*. I do not refer as yet to the great moral wound which He came to heal, I refer to all the pains arising from wounded and blighted affections. The Redeemer of the world could not endure the sight of a widow following the bier of her son, and I have already shown you Jesus groaning and weeping at the grave of Lazarus. Mary and Martha felt that their sorrow had become His; "Behold how he loved him," said the Jews. How rare and short-lived in us is the generous sympathy which really makes us partakers of the grief and anguish of our brethren! "Who is weak, and I am not weak?" said St. Paul (2 Cor. ii. 29). This is love, and its hallowed fellowship. Let us confess that we have a very imperfect knowledge of it. That which does not affect us personally only just touches us, and too often does but glide over the surface of our souls; beneath all our protestations broken hearts discern a secret indifference, something very ordinary and cold; they say to themselves as they listen to us, "It is very easy for them to talk about endurance and resignation; what would it be if they

themselves had to bear the heavy weight which crushes us?" The afflicted would not use such language if they felt that we had made their trouble our own, and had passed through the deep waters with them. We slept, like the disciples in Gethsemane, while they were enduring agony of soul; and we thought it enough to utter a few words of sympathy when they returned to us. We have no right to offer ourselves as comforters if we have not fought and wept with them, and if they have reason to say, "What, could ye not watch with us one hour?" You will think perhaps that life with such conditions would not be tolerable. I cannot say what it might become; or rather I believe it would be great and noble, and that in any case it would be helpful to others. Enter a house of mourning with a heart full of emotion, and still re-echoing with the blow which has been struck; go thither, not to perform a social duty or a Church duty, but impelled by a sympathy that moves your very deepest feelings; mingle your tears with those that are flowing there, and you will see how much good you will do to the afflicted, what gentle influence you will exert over their heart: then speak to them of Him in whose name you went there; you will thus have opened the way for Him, and have done more by a few tears than by the noisiest protestations.

But there is a greater calamity than bereavement, or poverty, or any earthly affliction that can be imagined; it is that of the immortal soul, which is hurrying on its way to ruin. What are all the sorrows in the world compared with the loss of a soul, the worth of which exceeds that of a whole world? This is the disaster, this is the destruction, which should distress our hearts. This was the bitterest drop of suffering in the Saviour's cup. I find traces of it everywhere in His earthly career. We have seen Him moved to pity at the sight of the hungry multitudes; but how great was the compassion which, according to the gospels, He felt for the scattered sheep of Israel, who were wandering without a shepherd, see-

ing that their guides had become mercenaries and thieves who were leading them far away from the sheepfold. One moment it seemed as if they would return to the care of the Shepherd who gives His life for His sheep; the people followed close on His steps, they hung as it were on His lips: but they only sought after the bread which perisheth. When Jesus refused to break it again, the people withdrew, and cursed Him whom they had desired to proclaim as their king. And then, contemplating with unspeakable sorrow the trooping multitudes who were forsaking Him, and having only a small group of disciples about Him, He said to them with all the grief of misunderstood affection, "And you, will you also go away?" Why that complaint, that other and still more distressing word, addressed to His first hearers who had now become His enemies, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life"? Ah! He knew, He truly felt that they were destroying themselves; this destruction was a reality in His sight, He sounded its depths, He foresaw all the misery and despair which would follow it. He wept for those who did not weep, but who were so soon to weep when there would be no hand to wipe away their tears, tears that burn but yield no profit. Hence there is some one sadder than the young rich man who rejects salvation and departs,—namely He who called him, because He knows what the young man did not know, because He holds the secret of his awful destiny, and suffers from it for him as if He were entering upon it Himself.

A moment came before the end of His earthly career, when all these feelings burst forth from the Redeemer's broken heart in a word which is like the sigh of His misunderstood love. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." In vain did He multiply the signs of His power and love; in vain did His word resound in the streets and squares of the Holy City; in vain did He go everywhere doing good. The Divine message has been rejected, and the nation that has slain

the prophets and then built their sepulchres is about to put the King's son to death,—Him who has come to replace the servants of the master of the vineyard, that He may utter His last and most solemn appeal. Every effort has been useless; the hypocrites and the materialistic priests have been too much for Him. Jerusalem has allowed its day of grace to pass away, and now all is over; the rebellion is about to bear its fruits. For the last time Christ addresses Himself to the ungrateful city; He beholds it from the prophetic heights, whence His eye scans the future; He sees it ruined, smitten with the curse, and disappearing beneath a deluge of blood; He sees the temple rased, and the rebellious race wanderers in all lands; above all, He beholds immortal souls, which might have escaped, involved in condemnation. And yet,—as He says to Himself,—I came to save these men, they drew near to Me, they heard Me, My hand was stretched out toward them, they had only to lay hold of it. When Jeremiah cried out, “O ye that pass by, say is there any sorrow to be compared with mine?” he was seated on the smoking ruins of the city of his fathers, and groaning over the exile of his fellow-countrymen; it was for earthly misfortunes chiefly that he wept. The sorrow of Christ was a hundred times greater; the Divine Prophet, like another Jeremiah, has before His eye very different calamities and a much more terrible ruin; and these souls who reject Him, are they not much more ravaged with evil and scepticism than the soil of Zion in the days when the king of Babylon wrought destruction there. Further, you will not find in Jeremiah a more saddening word than that in which Jesus Christ expressed His grief; “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”

But the unhappy fate of Jerusalem was not the only source of anguish for the Redeemer's heart; there was

also that of the whole ruined world, which He desired to save. We have already remarked that the profound experience of human perversity was in His case a real moral crucifixion. All the pains which a sinless being could not know, such as remorse, inconsolable regret for lost happiness, absolute estrangement from God, in one word hell, Jesus knew them all by the power of His sympathy. Yes, He wept with those who weep without hope in the place where the Lord can no more be called upon; He knew what perdition was, so thoroughly did He enter into human misery in its extremest consequences. Those who imagine that He could not know hell, except by being actually subject to the curse of condemnation, do not know what love is; they do not understand how far its compassion reaches. It was precisely because He saw everything, experienced everything, and suffered everything appertaining to this generous sorrow, that though free to withhold His life He gave it. Tell me not that there is a contradiction between the agony of His last night and His heroic bearing at Golgotha; it was because Christ saw into the abyss of terror and misery into which a rebellious race must be plunged, that He unhesitatingly ascended the steps of the fearful altar. Ah! in order to close such a gulf, to snatch one soul from it, it was worth while to go through all the humiliation, all the tortures of the accursed tree, and even the mysterious abandonment of His Father. Such is the compassion of a God who became man.

It is especially for this sad condition of men that we should feel the poignant compassion which formed so large an element in the Saviour's sufferings. Do we believe, yes or no, that there is but one Name given under heaven whereby men may be saved? Do we believe that no one shall see the kingdom of God except he is born again? In one word, do we believe in the gospel, in redemption? To believe in salvation is to believe in perdition. Salvation has no value, except as perdition is a reality.

Now if we believe these things, how does it come to pass that we are so calm and so peaceful in presence of the innumerable souls that are perishing? The fact is, our faith is vague and weak. Spiritualize as you may the images by means of which perdition is set forth, allow to Divine love infinite resources for reaching the souls who have ignored it here below,—but admit that for the finally rebellious soul, which has rejected, though fully acquainted with the consequences, the only means of salvation, there is an abode of despair and misery, a dark dungeon, where the immortal soul only lives to consume itself, far away from the God whom it would not serve. Jesus, the tender and merciful Friend of humanity, did not cease to warn men that the broad way in which they are walking most surely ends there: and whosoever throws a veil over condemnation is a blind leader of the blind; he says, “Peace, peace, where there is no peace;” he is a seducer and a deceiver, and the idealized Christianity which he preaches is a lie. He is the flatterer of the world, and there is not a false prophet whose teaching is more mischievous. For myself, it is because I believe in condemnation as I believe in salvation that I appeal in all earnestness to your consciences. But if I had the feelings which Jesus Christ had, if like Him I had sounded the abyss at our feet, if I had felt the night from which all brightness has been excluded descending and resting on my soul, if I had a real idea of condemnation, if I had wept as He wept over misguided Jerusalem, oh what urgent words would I address to you! how they would subdue and pierce you! and how such appeals, coming from a heart full of compassion and feeling a holy grief for lost souls, would vibrate within you! how under these words, all too cold, there would boil a vehement affection, irresistible in its intense earnestness.

What I say of the preacher I might say of every Christian. What is wanting to enable him to win for God all the souls who surround him, unless it be the holy grief of compassion, I do not say for their moment-

ary sorrows, but for the inconsolable misery which hangs over their head? What have you most deplored hitherto, the afflictions or the unconverted state of those whom you love? When sick, you surround them with the tenderest attention, you watch by their beds, you share their ills; if they are smitten in their property, their reputation, or their affections, you feel yourselves smitten with them; if they are happy, your joy is complete. And nevertheless they are in a state of perdition as long as they have not given themselves to Jesus Christ! yet this is almost a matter of indifference to you. Beware, you are unconsciously deluding yourselves; you feel for them sentiments so tender, so benevolent, that it seems impossible to you that they should not be shared by their Judge and yours; and you forget that He loves them infinitely more than you love them, but that if He has done everything to make their salvation sure He will not save them without faith in the Saviour. You cannot imagine that it is possible you should ever be separated from them, and you forget that natural bonds do not become eternal except as love according to the Spirit sanctifies love according to the flesh. You forget the Saviour's word, "One shall be taken and the other left." You forget that Christianity, which often divides the family in this life, may divide it much more thoroughly in the life to come. Such thoughts are painful; I apply them simply to your present relations, knowing that death has its merciful mysteries and convinced that a large number of those who have disappeared from amongst us have turned a last look toward the cross. But this hope, all too vague alas! must not lead us to cherish a deceitful security. It is time to labour for the salvation of those who are left; salvation is within their reach, and we can do much, everything perhaps, to bring them to Jesus Christ. It is because I have this assurance that I do not shrink from distressing your minds; I could wish to do still more, for I am certain that what is wanting in us is

distress, this grief, this terror at the thought of a terrible perdition. A compassion which goes down to the very depths of a destiny of suffering leads us to make such urgent entreaties that the hardest heart can no longer resist, especially if we are guided by the tact of pity. Do not be satisfied therefore with loving, with surrounding with care and affection, those with whom you are ; do more, take pity on them, cherish a holy and tender pity for their souls. Yes, pity for the souls entrusted to you, and which will perish if you do not snatch them away from the world. Pity for them ! Let everything in your manner form as it were an urgent appeal to them ; surround them with an atmosphere of truth and love, travail in pain for them, and do not cease your efforts till you bring them to Christ as the glorious spoil of the long contest of compassionate love.

Love has no bounds but the world. You have no right to shut yourselves up in the enclosure of your family ; the Christian's heart should love all that the Lord loves. Stretch your compassion therefore, till it embraces all who groan and suffer here below. There are moments when you get, as it were, a glimpse of the misery of the whole race, when all that is sad and distressing in the whole range of existence vibrates within you. Such moments are too infrequent ; they are blessed, they enlarge the heart ; through the greatness of suffering they give us a presentiment of the greatness of consolation. But without embracing the whole world, and in order to escape from the vagueness amid which such feelings become indistinct and then vanish altogether, let us simply try for one moment to conceive of the amount of misery reigning in our own immediate neighbourhood. How often you sometimes thought of the amount of sin and sorrow which the omniscient eye of God beholds in a single day ? If we could for one instant embrace at a glance the whole of such a spectacle, we should be overwhelmed by it. Who can say what is hidden beneath the veil of one single night ? Who can count the tears,

the falls, the degradations, the despair, the criminal actions, the desolate agony, the deserted deathbeds? Who can count the blasphemies and sobs, the accursed hatred, and the still more accursed love? Who can unfold the conflict of passion in hearts inflamed by the excitement of life? and who in short can reckon up the vast amount of evil, and the consequences that must follow it, in one of the days which seem to the thoughtless to glide by so rapidly?

This is what is transpiring everywhere beneath the skies; and yet their serene light still shines on this corrupt world, the symbol of an unwearying love, because since the cross of Christ was planted here it is no longer a world living under the curse, and it is enough for the most depraved of its sons to turn a trustful look toward this cross, and everything will be set right. Hence the use of remembering the corruption and misery of our race, when we possess the true consolation. If we were to shed over it more bitter tears, if we felt for this lost and yet saved humanity a more powerful compassion, we should be seen dealing out with less of avarice our efforts, our gifts, and our prayers, as our personal contribution to the great enterprise by which it is sought to convey to the world the words of eternal life. The world would then be for ever rid of the selfish contentment of an empty Christianity that talks of nothing but joy, as if our personal salvation satisfied the immense love of God; in the highest sense of the word, we should fill up the sufferings of the Saviour who suffers for every lost soul until it has found life.

I am well aware that there will always be a frightful disproportion between our task and our efforts; but what we cannot perform we can talk about to God, that He may accomplish it. By means of prayer, the Christian who weeps with those who weep discharges the most touching and the most blessed priestly office. Every day, along with his own burden he carries to the foot of the cross that of his brethren and of the world, and thus

by his merciful ministrations he connects himself with the high-priesthood of the new covenant. It is thus that suffering, begotten by sin, but subdued and sanctified by grace, becomes through compassion a most noble and beneficent ministry. After cursing suffering as Job did, we come at length to exclaim with St. Paul, "I will glory in my infirmities." This is the gospel's last word respecting affliction; let it also be ours. What more consoling solution can we find for the mystery of suffering than that which reveals glory as even now contained in suffering itself?

Outlines.

Secret Discipleship.

"A disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear."—JOHN xix. 38.

ENEMIES, and avowed friends! Most men are included within either of these two categories, but not all. There is still a third class, of which we have but two examples by name in the volume of the Book, to wit Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa, and the description of whom is given in the words of the text—"disciples of Jesus, but secretly, for fear." We have their discipleship affirmed. On the highest of all authority we have it, that these men were disciples of Jesus. Nicodemus, if not expressly by the text, is yet by the direct and repeated testimony of other scriptures, set forth in this character. The two men thus occupy a common standing.

I. The character of their discipleship,—“but secretly.” Here the fact of their discipleship and the character of it seem to clash. If the fact of their discipleship was to their highest honour, this its character was their deepest shame. They had gotten light, but they would fain keep and enjoy it by themselves. They had become religious, and still they desired that

their newly awakened experience should perpetuate itself in delightful frames and feelings. They shrank from its being evidenced without, from its being known abroad. The thing is shameful. And yet there is not, after all, anything very inconsistent with human nature here. A like course of action is common enough. What moreover, if those men, feeling these as the deepest movings of their souls, feared to speak them out lightly or too soon? Whatever the reason, this was the thought, the purpose of these men, secret discipleship. How interesting to note, as over against this, the opposing purpose of God. If at any time there was a need-be for secrecy, surely it was then, when the rage of Christ's enemies had so triumphed that the Roman governor quailed before it and delivered Jesus to their will. But whatever the difficulties and dangers of it, it is just at that time, when human policy would have dictated the opposite course, that God interfered to compel these men to be true to their convictions, and to act out the Divine life which had been begotten in their souls. They wished to be secret disciples; God's will was that they should be open and professed followers. It had been said aforetime "with the rich in his death;" and now not merely the meaning but the personal reference of the words is plain. This was it: that Joseph of Arimathæa should give Him a grave, and that Nicodemus the ruler should bring spices to anoint His body to the burial. They wished to be secret disciples; but they were in God's hand; and so they not only did the open and prominent and dangerous work to which He had appointed them, but, as we further read in this same scripture, they addressed themselves to it "boldly."

In these things we have a striking illustration of the principle which is often witnessed to in Scripture, that confession is necessary along with belief, in order to salvation. Specifically therefore we may say of secret discipleship that it is a sin:—1st, As being contrary to the will of God. 2ndly, As showing us sadly wanting in

rightful gratitude to Christ. And 3rdly, As being most unlovely, grossly selfish, in relation to our fellow-men.

II. The reason of the reservation of these two men, the cause of secret discipleship,—“for fear.” Against the conduct of these men as thus represented it were most easy for us to launch out into bitter sarcasm or unsparing denunciation. Such a course however would be as unworthy in us as it would be useless as regards the men against whom we spake. They have got far beyond the reach of our praise or censure. Yes, and not this alone; the men are not without very considerable reasons of self-justification. The fear which kept them back was indeed the fear of man; but not therefore may we conclude it light and groundless. Before it not only had the stout-hearted Peter played the coward, and thrice denied his Lord; *he* also who was wont lovingly to pillow his head on the Master’s bosom forsook Him with the rest, and afterwards, repenting of such conduct, followed Him but afar off. Thus these acted, though they knew Christ so well, and besides had nothing to lose by a public profession of Him. What wonder then that these rich rulers were afraid? Their earthly all was at stake. But profess Christ, and they were expelled from the synagogue, made the mark for scorn and unholy wit in the sanhedrim, mayhap deprived their seat there also. Despite these terrors, under which they laboured, Nicodemus did bear testimony for Christ in the public assembly, putting the quiet but telling question whether the law judged any man before it hear him. And then see them coming thus together to the cross: doubtless to weep there as well as to bury Him who had thus died, to weep tears of penitential sorrow for their past shameful secrecy and silence, tears of homage for departed worth, tears of heart-felt love. As we look upon them, let us not deride them at their sacred work. We may not even rightly call them “disciples of the tomb.” No; and rather than this, let us believe that, not mentioned by name among the Pente-

costal hundred and twenty, they nevertheless were there; that, though no historian record it, they served their Master in the gospel by a quiet yet efficient service; and that now, far up among the glorified, they praise Him in all the louder and heartier song just because they sought to be, and were for a season, secret disciples here.

But while we thus excuse, and hope the best, concerning these men, let us not deceive ourselves. Secret discipleship has now become none other than a flagrant iniquity. We have eighteen centuries more of evidence to prove Christ Lord. Again, it was the fear of the reputed good, the spiritual guides, of the nation, that kept these men back; whereas it is before the presence of the sinful and the unbelieving that we are deterred. They had everything of a temporal kind to lose, whereas for us allegiance to Christ has the promise both for the life that now is and for that which is to come. When everything thus presses us forward, it is the greatest sin to tarry.

Quite possibly, however, some are deterred from the public profession of Christ's name, not so much by the fear of others as through fear of themselves. Men and women are disciples of Jesus, and yet secretly, because they are afraid lest, having professed, they should fall away again and so bring the greater dishonour upon Christ. Far be it from us to condemn all such reasoning, or to deal unkindly by them of whom it is urged. This however we must in faithfulness and charity declare. We must say to the persons, whoever they be, who thus act, that they are wrong, that they sin, in that they are only half trusting to Christ. We must enjoin upon them that they leave themselves wholly in His hand, committing all possibilities to Him. And that we may the rather secure this, we must insist upon it that confession with the mouth is necessary with belief in the heart, in order to salvation. We must further urge on men that this seeming self distrust is often but a

blind, induced by the devil, to cover the real cause, which is none other than that fear of man of which we have already spoken. As against this we must recall the word of Christ, "Wherefore whosoever shall be ashamed of me, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed." The law of the kingdom is—The more life, the richer fruit! The more faith, the fuller confession! The greater love to Christ, the more work for Christ! And this is the promise; "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."

Blackburn.

J. M. STOTT, M.A.

God our Refuge.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," etc.—
Ps. xlv. 1-3.

THERE is an allusion in these words to the cities of refuge.

I. What God is to the Christian—a *refuge, strength, a present help in trouble.*

1. He is a *refuge*. This refuge greatly excels those cities of Israel, which were appointed for places of refuge to the manslayer. (a) We have the protection of all the six in one refuge, in one Mediator, in one Jesus. (b) The gospel refuge comes to the guilty, very near to him; only believe, and he is in the midst of it. (c) Those refuges were only temporary, but this is eternal. (d) Those cities of refuge only opened their gates for the innocent who were without enmity; but in the true refuge the enmity is slain as it were at the entrance, and the enemy is reconciled. (e) Those cities of refuge were only places of protection, without liberty; only the death of the high-priest made the refugees free. (f) Those cities of refuge were of no avail to the feeble and weak; these were not helped in any way to escape from the avenger of blood.

2. *Strength.* Not only is He a refuge to us, to save our lives from deserved punishment; He also strengthens us to flee, and that—(1) By His Spirit; (2) By promises and encouragements; (3) By means of grace.

3. *A very present help in time of trouble.* His word says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee." There are many days which may be called "days of trouble." (1) The day of contrition: so it was on the Pentecost, and with Saul. (2) The day of temptation is "time of trouble:" so it was with Peter once; Satan sifted him as wheat, Satan purposed to drive him away before the wind of temptation like chaff; but Peter was a grain of wheat. (3) The season of affliction is a "time of trouble." (4) The day of death will be a "time of trouble."

II. The confidence of the believer in God as his "refuge, strength, and very present help in time of trouble."

1. He says he "will not fear." He will not fear in the refuge. The manslayer would be afraid for his life, were he only a yard outside the walls of the city; but once inside he might say, "I will not fear." He might hear the sound of the avenger following close and savagely after him; but as he is within there is no danger. So it is with the Christian, "There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus."

2. God, being the believer's *strength* and *help*, supplies the want and loss of everything. What should the ungodly do if the earth were removed and the mountains carried into the midst of the sea? Their all is connected with this world; but as for the Christian, if all these things were passed away he would lose nothing.

3. The people of God have a reason for not fearing, it is not temerity in them. "Therefore will not we fear:" God says, "let him take hold of my strength," as a child takes hold of his father's hand.

The Effect of Grace.

“By the grace of God I am what I am.”—1 Cor. xv. 10.

I. THE character of the man that was distinguished by grace.

1. That of a Christian. (1) One professing the faith of Christ, a convert, one come over from another faith. (2) One maintaining the Christian life without falling, without dishonour, no light matter. (3) One enjoying the Christian hope—“blessed hope,” that makes not ashamed.

2. That of an apostle of Jesus Christ. (1) He had seen, and was chosen by, the Lord Jesus Himself. He took not that honour on himself, did not enter upon it without call or qualification. (2) He had marvellous endowments for this work: revelations, inspiration, gifts, miraculous endowments.

3. An apostle with abundant labours. (1) He had a happy recollection of his labours, “I laboured more abundantly than they all,” “I am not behind the very chiefest.” (2) His labours were most fruitful: Churches that he planted; his epistle; Timothy his son in the faith; “Titus mine own son after the common faith;” Philemon “owed his own self to him.”

4. His position of privilege and influence in the Church. (1) Great personal religious eminence: taken up to the third heaven; frequent communings. (2) Head of the Gentile Christians, emphatically *their* apostle. (3) Appointed teacher of the early Gentile Churches: by his personal ministry, superintendence, epistles. (4) Instructor of all ages and races of Christians in their faith: all appeal to him, his word, authority.

II. Paul recognises the grace of God as the source and strength of his character.

1. By grace he obtained mercy: “I obtained mercy.”

2. Grace changed his character from a blasphemer, persecutor, and injurious, into a reverent, humble, and sincere Christian. He was converted.

3. Grace was signally displayed in allowing such a one to be an apostle : after such antecedents, such opposition, such hatred, such cruelties, how unexpected !

4. His qualifications were not natural, but those of grace. Not extraordinary abilities, accomplished parts, commanding genius ; “not I, but Christ that liveth in me.”

5. The results not simply the production of human causes, but of the interposition of grace changing men's minds, converting them. These great results beyond all human causation : “not by might nor by power, but by my spirit ;” “by the grace of God I am what I am,” and have done what I have done.

III. Grace is an abiding blessing among believers.

1. To the Christian community. What is it without grace ? It is strengthened, held together, refined, sanctified by grace. How appropriate the apostolic benediction, “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.” Grace makes it equal to all its endurances, “my grace is sufficient for thee :” for all its enterprises, “I am with you.”

2. To the individual Christian : to hold him back from sin, when sorely tempted ; to restrain and overcome his fears ; to aid him in pressing forward to the end.

3. To the Christian minister. In heeding the call God to take on him this ministry ; I am unequal to it but grace is a sufficient supplement. In view of his work to act on the minds of men, persuade them to change their minds, their tastes, dispositions, and attitudes toward God : who can undertake a work of such character and magnitude ? In experiencing its disappointments. How many these are ! How unexpected often His best hopes crossed ; his fairest prospects blighted ; his truest joys extinguished ; his work that promised so well, that seemed so fruitful, now proved to be vain. In contemplating its responsibilities : “they watch for your souls,” are answerable for their good teaching.

knowledge of God's will, for their understanding the terms of the gospel; in some solemn sense answerable for their soul's welfare, health, and life! No man can rightly estimate these. Yet he may endure them by the grace of God: "I can do all things through Christ."

4. How signally this grace still asserts itself against men's determination. Paul determined to be all his days an enemy to Christianity; grace reversed his determination. Many a man is foiled by grace in similar determinations now: against their passions and instincts. Raceless godless men reformed, recovered, regenerated. The glorious changes it creates in men's character, spirit, enterprises, destinies.

IV. Reflections.

1. How stupendous is the power of this grace, acting not simply upon weak, timid, uninstructed natures, but here upon the strong, the resolute, the polished, the philosophical.

2. How beneficently it works! It blesses, helps, and accours the Church, gives it a valiant and victorious champion. It blesses the man, saves him, sanctifies him, and makes him a blessing to all.

3. How well for us to recognise the claims of grace! It is the gift of God: we owe everything to it, our character, life, works, hopes, joys, successes. When tempted to indulge in human pride, let this come into our remembrance, we are nothing without grace.

4. Let every one of us seriously contemplate this grace. We have to do with it. Paul entreats us not to receive it in vain. Let us welcome it, confide in it, follow it; and it will lead us into life. How sad for us hereafter to be confronted with grace reversed!

Bamford.

J. BROWN, B.A.

Reviews.

THE MYSTERY OF GROWTH, AND OTHER DISCOURSES. By
Rev. EDWARD WHITE. *Elliot Stock.*

The perusal of a volume like the above affords us no ordinary pleasure. Rarely do we find combined so many excellences as we have in this book: fresh and stimulating thought, expressed with simplicity and force, searching analysis with varied illustration, extensive learning with great earnestness, rigid logic with deep spirituality, fearlessness in handling Scripture combined with caution and reverence. The discourses are of the most varied character: the first, from which the volume has its title, being a harvest-thanksgiving sermon to Londoners: the second on "Spiritual intercourse with God;" the third on Miracles; the fourth on the Asiatic revolution in the age of Nebuchadnezzar; the following ten on Jesus Christ and incidents in His character. Discourse xx. is a remarkable illustration of the author's plain speaking and practical power; xxiv. What is a Sunday book? of his treatment of questions of the day.

THE BEGGARS. By J. B. DE LIEFDE. *Hodder & Stoughton.*

This is a historical tale, in which are told in a living and spirited way some of the most stirring incidents connected with the founding of the Dutch republic. By the oppressions of the Duke of Alva numbers of the inhabitants of the Netherlands were deprived of their all. These men, full of vengeance, formed themselves into guerilla bands and attacked on every possible occasion the Spaniards and the priests, whom they regarded as the chief cause of their calamities. They gave themselves the name of "Beggars," or "Gueux." Mr. De Liefde, from his thorough acquaintance with the history of his fatherland and his natural power of description, has given us a very interesting and instructive book. He gains our attention from the first, and retains it to the last by the interest of the story and the spirited way in which he tells it. A historical novel is often useful in awakening an interest which leads to the careful study of the portion of history to which the tale refers. Few portions of foreign history are more worthy of careful study than that of the eighty years' struggle which resulted in the formation and consolidation of the Dutch republic.

The Image of God.

PROFESSOR ROBERT FLINT, ST. ANDREW'S UNIVERSITY.

God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.—GEN. i. 27.

These words state a fact on which we cannot too seriously meditate. The whole dignity of human nature, all that constitutes its superiority over that of the other creatures that inhabit the earth, rests on, and centres in this, that God has given to man the exclusive privilege on earth of bearing His image. It is in virtue of this that he is made for truth, morality, and religion. The history of human degradation is the history of man's loss of his image, and the whole plan of redemption is one of restoration with increased splendour of that image. The creation of man in the image of God, man's loss of his image, the restoration of it in him, these are the great events, epochs, chapters of human history, as viewed in the light of religion, as related in revelation. Recognizing then that our text states a fact so important, let us turn our attention seriously to its study, with earnest prayer for Divine enlightenment as to what the image of God in which man was created was, and as to the lessons that we may draw from the truth regarding it, for our edification and instruction.

Now of this at least there can be no doubt, that man was made in God's image, not as to his body, but as to his soul. God is a spirit, and man's likeness to God can

only be in his being a spirit. It is worse than vain to seek for the features of the Divine image either in bodily properties or animal tendencies. They must be sought for in spiritual qualities and affections, in what raises man above the earthly and animal, in what is peculiar to him and distinctive of him among all the inhabitants of this world. Alarm has of late been felt because some men of science have begun to doubt, or deny, the reality of certain distinctions hitherto supposed to exist between the bodies of men and of the lower animals, as if religion were thereby brought into danger, as if man's transcendent superiority of nature and of destiny were about to be disproved. But surely the alarm is foolish. Man's body has doubtless been more curiously and complexly fashioned than that of any other creature: yet being formed of the same elements, and on a plan essentially the same as lower organisms, science may be expected constantly to discover between it and them more numerous and intimate relations; and it must be unwise in the extreme to represent man's distinctive dignity as dependent on any peculiarity of that which is least and meanest in him, his body—which does undoubtedly link him to the lower animal world, and is altogether of the earth earthy—instead of on the general character and manifestation of that which is truly great in him, his soul, which makes him akin not to beasts, but to angels, being of a heavenly and Divine origin. It is there that the Bible and sound reason would have us place the peculiar glory of man, to have fallen from which is his peculiar shame, and to be restored to which is his peculiar blessedness. "God created man in his own image;" that is the fact on which we must rest, if we would vindicate man's claim to be of

altogether different and nobler nature than any other inhabitant of earth, as it is likewise the fact on which all God's dealings with man have proceeded, and is thus at the corner-stone of human nature and of Divine revelation.

When I say that man was made in the image of God—as to his soul, I do not of course mean that the hand of God is not to be seen on his body. The whole earth is full of the glory of God. Day unto day uttereth knowledge, and night unto night teacheth knowledge concerning Him. There is no atom of earth, no blade of grass, no joint or limb of any living thing, on which the power, wisdom, and goodness of God may not be perceived to have been at work. But evidences of God's character are not necessarily features of His character.

An image must be a mark; but He may leave many a mark of His presence which is not an image. Material things, in fact, cannot bear His image, but only His mark. Magnitudes, arrangements of parts, forms, colours, and other properties of bodies, may convey to one spirit much information about another spirit; but they cannot, from their very nature, represent the features of a spirit. Matter can only represent matter; spirit alone cannot bear the image of a spirit. A material image of a spirit is utterly inconceivable by the human mind. Extension! that is no property of spirit. Arrangement of parts! a spirit has no parts. Colour and form! these belong solely to bodies. On the other hand, look at the attributes of spirit—self-determining power, wisdom, holiness, goodness, holiness; and you will perceive at once that none of them can be found in matter of itself, or in any of its combinations. Man has thus, in virtue of his spiritual

nature, the exclusive privilege, so far as this world is concerned, of bearing the image of God. Free-will, intelligence, love, morality, these things which are in him in some degree, are likewise in God, although in an infinite degree. They are features which the spirit of man bears in common with the spirit of God. Whatever is in matter is not in God, and whatever is in God is not in it; but all that is most essential to the human soul is what its Creator also possesses in the infinite fulness and absolute perfection of Godhead. The more we reflect then on the declaration of our text, which makes the great distinction of man to be that God created him in His own image, the more wondrous will its depth and truth appear to us to be.

It was as to his soul then, as to his spiritual nature, that man was made in the image of God; and it is there, and not in his bodily or animal nature, that we are to look for it. But it may perhaps be said,—We may look but we shall not find; God's image is a lost thing, and there is no knowing what it was. The degradation into which man has sunk is so deep, that some have supposed all traces of the Divine image to have been effaced from the soul by the fall. And certainly when we look at the ignorance, the vice, and impiety, which are the sad heritage of fallen nature, at its perversity of judgment and of will, its impurity of feeling, its selfishness of desire, its envy, deceit, licentiousness, and godlessness, it is hard to recognise, through such gloom and amidst such mire, anything that tells of a celestial origin. Yet it were unwise to deny that indications thereof do exist. God has not left Himself without a witness in any heart. The Spirit of the Lord even, His supernatural influence, is not

wholly withdrawn from any one. It is as impossible perhaps to find in this world an entirely natural man, one whom God by His Spirit has never visited, never touched, never affected in any way, as to find an entirely spiritual man, one who yields himself with undivided affection and energy to the guidance of grace. So, although the image of God itself has indeed been lost from human nature, fragments, features of it still remain, but dimmed, broken, and scattered. The spirit of man is now very far indeed from being a clear mirror to reflect the beauty of the Lord; yet it is still obvious that such was the design of its creation. Deny, in fact, that there is any trace in the soul of the character of God, and you deny the possibility of a knowledge of God. Revelation could not in such a case inform us what God's character is. To a man blind from birth no written or spoken words can convey a notion of what is meant by blue or green; although an angel from heaven were to tell him that the sky is blue and the grass green, that would make him none the wiser. And no less useless would it be for the Bible to say God is wise, or God is holy, if man were wholly destitute of the spiritual attributes which correspond to wisdom and holiness, if he were without power to apprehend truth, or devoid of the sense of virtue. In the midst of all the perversions of our nature, however, it is possible to form some notion of what its perfection would be, and amidst all the abuses of our faculties it is possible to discern their true uses; and the perfection of our nature, the right use of our faculties, would be to bear the image of God. A true manhood would be a small indeed, yet would it be a clear and accurate, mirror of the character of God.

But we have not been left thus to discover by our own reflections what the lost image of God was. The whole plan of redemption, as I have said, is a plan for the restoration of that image in man. And how is it proposed to work out that blessed plan? Why, just by the disclosure to us of all and more than all that man had lost, and in a form so attractive that we shall love it, and in loving it be changed gradually into the likeness of it. God has come down to us in His Son, "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person;" and there we see what perfect manhood is, what the image of God in man is; and salvation means nothing else than our so yielding ourselves up in faith and love to the impression it is fitted to produce in us as to be renewed in the likeness of it. Grace is but the source, and redemption but the process, and glory but the issue, of a gradual substitution of the image of the heavenly for that of the earthly, from the lowest depth of our lost estate, till we awake above satisfied with the likeness of our God and our Saviour. So far is it from being true that the image of God in man is a thing either hopelessly beyond our knowledge, or one the knowledge of which little concerns us, that the whole Christian life may be described as the contemplation of it in Christ and the realization of it in ourselves, and the whole Christian scheme as a plan for the origination, maintenance, and increase of such life.

In endeavouring to ascertain what the image of God is, it is important to remark that its features are not mere faculties, but perfections. They are faculties directed and exercised as they ought to be. It is an instructive fact, in this connection, that Adam was made in the image of God not a child but a man. By growing

up into a true manhood we grow up into the image of God. Human nature, so far as it is separable from activity, so far as it is merely passive, as it is mere capacity, mere unexerted faculty, is not properly the image of anything, and it depends on what is made of it whether it shall bear the image of God or Satan. The faculty of understanding, the capacity of affection, the power of will, are the conditions through which alone the soul can bear a spiritual image of any kind; but it is only such exertion of understanding as constitutes true wisdom, only affection awake and active as pure and self-denying love, only a righteously regulated will, which are really features of God's image. It may be doubted whether we are entitled to speak of mere faculty or mere capacity in God, whether we are entitled to speak as if there were in Him a nature distinct from His personality, instead of its being His very nature to be a purely personal Being, knowing, loving, and acting, with no nature, necessity, or fate underlying His power, wisdom, and love. But whether this be so or not, the faculties and capacities of man, simply in themselves, are only to be regarded as conditions, not as features, of God's image; for abused they become features of Satan's image, and those who possess them Satan's children, bearing his hateful likeness.

The fundamental condition, the one which is deepest and includes all others, in virtue of which man is able to bear God's image, is that he is a spirit. His soul is of the same order of existence as God. It has for its proper life the same kind of life. It is as a drop of water taken from the ocean, which has its own separate individuality and yet an identity of nature with its source. It is thus in its very essence, in the very foundation and substance

of its being, fitted to represent God, to be an image of Him, although even in its best estate it could only be an exceedingly dim and imperfect image ; since even in un-fallen man it was imprisoned within the narrow compass of the bodily frame, whereas the Spirit of the Lord filleth the universe,—since it originated with God and was dependent upon Him, whereas God Himself has a necessary and self-existent life, warranting the word of St. Paul, “God only hath immortality.” But if, as I have said, the image of God cannot be constituted by mere faculty or capacity without activity and manifestation, the mere having a soul, the mere being a spirit, will not make man bear the image of God. To do so he must *live the proper life of a spirit.*

Now what is that life ? It cannot be, never could be, an inherent life, that is a self-existent, self-sustaining life—God alone has such a life. Nor can it be a life drawn from nature ; for the spirit is higher than all that is in nature, and its life cannot be sustained on material things. Bread will not satisfy its immortal hunger. The eternal life demands a satisfaction which only eternal things can give. It must be, in fact, life in God, or, what is the same thing, the life of God in the soul. Spiritually to live is just to be constantly receiving life from the one fountain of life. The soul may either choose God or that which is not God, this power it has ; but if it choose as its source of life what is not God, it necessarily results, from the very relation of the created to the uncreated, that it must meet with disappointment, must find death where it seeks life. There is no other life proper to a spirit but the life of God. The soul which has lost this, which has fallen from God and sunk into the natural life,

that it follows as sense and selfishness lead, is dead as a soul. And God is not the God of the dead but of the living. He is the living God, yea, life itself; and only a living spirit can be an image of Him. Death cannot represent life. Is there anything more needed to convince us that the fall is no fiction, but a terrible reality? That even those who take what we would be apt to call some views about the effects of it may have much to offer them? If life in God be the only true life of a spirit, without which it cannot possibly bear the image of God, if to be without this life is to be dead as a spirit. A spirit to bear the image of what is of the earth earthy, has its image not indeed been dreadfully lost from the faces of men? for how few of them live their true life, and how poorly even these few live it! Are there not many, notwithstanding their immortal souls, live not the life of a spirit, the life of God, but the life of sense, the life of beasts? And are not all alien by nature from God, dead to Him, and alive only to the world? And notwithstanding all that grace can do, does not this deadness, this want of affinity to God, this want of likeness to Him, prevail in the best of us to a most painful extent?

It is then only where the true and proper life of a spirit dwells that the image of God can be. This however is a very general truth, and we have still to describe the several parts of that image in which God created man. Now a spirit can manifest what it is, can manifest what is in it, through the three great properties or functions of thought, feeling, and action. A spirit has *intellect*, *affection*, and *will*; and if it bear the image of God at all, it must bear it in and on these.

1. What then would it be to bear the image of God in our minds or intellects? It is obvious that through having a mind man may represent one aspect of God's character. God is the supreme Intelligence, an infinite Mind; and He has made man capable of imaging forth the glorious perfection of His nature, by bestowing on him understanding, the faculty of knowledge, the power of exploring the connections of outward things and of penetrating even beyond the world of sense to eternal realities. It is obvious indeed also that mind in man, even if exerted and perfected to the utmost, can be but a feeble reflection of what it is in Him who gave it; for, while all things are naked and open before God, He seeing through all without effort, without research, without reasoning, by an intuitive, all-comprehensive, all-penetrative glance under which there can be no darkness at all, to man thorough knowledge of anything great or small is denied,—according to the profound utterance of St. Paul, "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know;" and even the little information which it is permitted him to attain must be acquired by much weighing of probabilities and sifting of arguments, by close attention and careful deliberation and laborious exertion. Still there is ever in one mind the possibility of representing any other mind, and even the feeble finite intelligence of man is not wholly denied the privilege of representing the infinite intelligence of God.

When is it that that possibility becomes a fact, that privilege a reality? It is only when man's thoughts, man's judgments coincide, so far as they go, with those of God. The thoughts of God are absolutely true. He sees things precisely as they are, both in themselves and

in their relations to other things. The mind of man is narrow in its range of vision, and can see only for a short way into anything ; still, so far as it does go, its vision, its judgment must either coincide with that of God or be false. It is only in so far as our minds can get as it were into the thoughts of God, and see things in the light in which He sees them, that they can see them truly, can have a real knowledge of them ; and it is only in so far that the thoughts which they have can represent the thoughts which He has.

But, my friends, how much knowledge may we have, and yet not have such knowledge as this ! How many thoughts may we have, and yet these thoughts recall God's thoughts of things only by their unlikeness to them ! Take all worldly wisdom. It is wisdom of a kind. The man who has it judges well how all things with which he has to do will affect his worldly prosperity, and how they may be made to serve the ends which he proposes to himself. It may show clearness, accuracy, far-sightedness in the highest degree ; but as it rests on, as it is pervaded by the falsehood that worldly prosperity is the great end of life, and that the salvation of the soul and the glory of God are things which may be safely subordinated to that, or altogether neglected, it can never be maintained to be true wisdom or perfection of intelligence ; in the light of pure truth, in the view of the God of truth, it must be folly and falsehood from beginning to end. It is the same with the knowledge of all those men of science who deny that there is anything beyond what mere science tells them, any world of reality beyond the created universe. Their knowledge may be in itself admirable ; but when it is held to be all in all, and instead of being used

to minister to religion is used to displace it, it is made foolishness, and darkens the mind which has it instead of making it bright and beautiful with the likeness of God.

Our souls can then only bear the image of God as to their intellects when they live in that higher truth in which the individual self is seen in its relative insignificance, and possess that wisdom which estimates the concerns of eternity as more momentous than those of time ; for all other light is delusive and all other wisdom is only folly disguised. It is only when our knowledge, so far as it goes, is true, not with respect to some end or standard which God does not approve of, but true with the absolute truthfulness which conformity to God's judgment involves, that our intellects in their operations and attainments exhibit that likeness to God in which He created man. It is a knowledge which Scripture has in many places been careful to tell us descendeth from above, and rightly, for that is the secret through making use of which it can alone be attained. If we would have it, we must receive it as a gift. It is no inherent property of certain minds ; it is not even what can be won by mere natural ability and perseverance. God has given us means of perfection and faculties of reasoning, by which to attain unto it ; but He has not so made these that they will succeed even, if they assert their independence of Himself and of the enlightenment of His Holy Spirit. He has set light and darkness before us, and left us free to take light or to take darkness ; but He has not left us free nor given us power to do what is in its own nature impossible ; and to find spiritual light, true wisdom, which is not from God, the Father of lights and the

Fountain of all true wisdom, is indeed a thing in its own nature impossible.

2. Man may be also like God in heart or affection. It is not the mind but the heart, not intellect but affection, which is deepest, which is central in human nature ; and if human nature be unlike the Divine nature here it is not worth speaking of its likeness to it at all. But it is most certain that the true life of the heart is one, for God and for man : that life is not knowledge, but love. The heart which loves not lives not. God is love. Love is, for ever and unchangeably, essential to His existence as God. That this is so, all nature and providence testify ; and yet unspeakably more than either has the wondrous act of sacrificing love shown on the cross testified it. Infinite as is the Divine heart, love fills it. And oh ! what love ! —a love which exceedeth unutterably all lower love : for the most ardent friendship, a wife's truest affection, a mother's utmost tenderness, marvellous in their depth and intensity as these can be, fall short, far as earth is beneath heaven, of the love which found full expression for itself only on the cross of Calvary.

Still God has by endowing the human heart with manifold capabilities of affection rendered it possible for it to represent in some degree this aspect of His character. All the true and holy love which sweetens and beautifies earthly life is a resemblance, although only a faint and glimmering resemblance, of the love which is in God. Wherever a human heart is seen purified and ennobled by a generous affection, we should be reminded of the loving heart of the Eternal Father. A mother's self-denying love for her child, a patriot's sufferings for his country, a martyr's readiness to seal his testimony with his blood,

these are all manifestations, however faint and feeble, of affections which have their pure and perfect fountain in the Divine nature, in the bosom of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

It is to be carefully observed however, as I have already said, that it is not the mere possessing of capacities of affection, nor even their active exercise, but their right exercise, so that they are pure, self-denying, and holy, which causes us to be in heart after the likeness of God. It is the loving with a love which is Divine in its source, and Divine in its nature, and which, while it rejoices in all of good that exists, ever finds itself supremely attracted to God as the Being in whom all goodness dwells and in whom all things worthy of love "live, and move, and have their being;" the loving with that love of which St. John says, "love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God," and again, "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." By nothing can man become so like to God as by that love.

3. But again, as in mind and heart, so also in life man may bear the image of God. God created the human soul with personal power, or will; gave it ability to act from within, to determine itself, and so to reflect His character in a way which the material world cannot. It is true that here the Divine glory could but dimly shine through the human medium, so infinitely superior is the will of God to that of man in its power, its freedom, its range of sway. It is the source of all created existence, supports and preserves and rules all, and cannot be constrained or baffled, misled or tempted, as the will of man can be, as the will even of Adam was; it is a will

its own law in itself, while the will of man has the will of God, and cannot seek its law else-
without thereby falling into sin and misery.

however as is the distance between the human
will, God gave man the power of will, in order
might be so far like His own as to be a righteous
which avoideth iniquity and followeth after

It should, so far as its sway extends, conform
to the requirements of moral law. In making
His image, God designed him to reflect on the
rough action, through exertion of will, through
conduct, in the measure determined by his
capacities, the moral excellency which He has
in infinite measure, in absolute perfection, and
of which filleth heaven, for there the angels
the throne cease not, as they veil their faces with
veils, to cry in sacred rapture, "Holy, holy, holy,
Lord of hosts."

then are the features of that image in which
created man. And in the day of his creation man
had of these features untarnished and unbroken;
each feature was in its proper place, was in a right
relation to every other feature. The result was, an image
of the spirit of man, not large perhaps, but true
so far as it went; immeasurably below its Original,
perfect of its kind and very beautiful. All was order,
harmony, and happiness within. The desires were
subject to the will; the will was obedient to the reason;
the mind was full of the pure and holy light which comes
from God. Truth filled the mind, and love the heart, and
joy the life of man; and he had no pain or sorrow,
no want unsatisfied, no good denied him.

II. We have thus considered the statement of our text in itself, and would now proceed to draw from it very briefly a few practical inferences.

1. Let it teach us in what the true dignity of human nature consists. It is not in any outward things which a man can possess, not in what is accidental and accessory, such as wealth or worldly rank, reputation or success; it is not in health of body, or strength, or beauty. It is in this alone, that God has made man a living soul, closely related by nature to Himself; that He has given to man the exclusive privilege on earth of bearing His image. It becomes us, remembering this truth, to respect the image of God both in ourselves and in others. In ourselves! If I make the attainment of any merely earthly advantage the great end of my being, if I throw my energies mainly or altogether into the pursuit of what will perish with the using, into any of the low ambitions of the world, instead of striving to cultivate in myself that elevation of thought, that purity of feeling, that holiness of life, which are elements of the image of God, I demean myself, am guilty of miserable self-degradation, sin grievously against my own nature, and ought to be filled with shame and contempt of myself. In others! If we would be neither arrogant to the poor nor crouching to the great, if we would be blameless alike of pride and meanness, we must learn to honour men at their real worth, to bow before whatever excellence testifies of God in man, wherever we see it, and to hold in slight esteem all those surface distinctions of fortune and class, the magnitude and value of which human vanity so grossly exaggerates. The soul of each one of you, my friends, has come from a source, and has been endowed with a nature the noblest; and surely the

ference is a reasonable one, that your conduct should be correspondingly noble.

2. Again, the truth that God created man in His image should teach us humility. It means, as we have seen, that all that we have of good in us, that all the attributes of our intellectual, moral, and active nature, all the powers by which we apprehend truth and follow good, are of God, are faint imitations of His perfections formed in us by His own hand. It means that we have nothing good in us that we have not received, and consequently we may not glory as if we had not received but created it. There is but one thing our own; it is the marring and spoiling of the good, it is the choice of evil and the rejection of good, it is the incessant continuance of the pernicious work which Satan tempted Adam to commence, the breaking and destroying of the holy image in which God created man, in which He placed the perfection and blessedness of man, and of which every fragment is still precious in His sight.

3. There is a third lesson. We have had our thoughts turned to the state in which man was created. We all know by sad experience how different is the state in which man now is. The spirit of man has still a life peculiar to it, one which must continue for ever; but that life flows on, not as it was meant to do, calm and bright under the light of God's countenance, but dark and sluggish, and foul with all the impurities of fleshly lust and appetite. Man is still endowed with free-will; but rooted aversion to God is manifest in his acts of choice. He has still no mean powers of knowledge, but is sadly devoid of spiritual discernment. His heart has still a vast capacity of loving; but it ever attaches itself to

objects which cannot fully satisfy it, and often to the vilest things. He can still admire virtue and religion; but he hates to practise them, and, approving what is good, he nevertheless does what is evil. The gold has become dim, the most fine gold has been changed. Harmony has given place to anarchy, happiness to misery. To what is the change to be traced? To the sin of Adam: one act of disobedience has brought death into the world, and all our woe. Can there, I ask, be a more striking, a more awful demonstration of the nature of sin and of the intensity of God's hatred of sin? See there what it has done! See how God regards it! We dare not say, we dare not think, that the punishment was greater than the offence deserved, but are constrained to believe that it was all due, and that if the consequences of the sins which men daily commit appear less terrible, it is in all probability only because we cannot trace them so well. If we could lift up the veil which hides the eternal world from our view, I fear the consequences of these actions might be seen to be as unutterably woeful. There was much that was exceptional about Adam's sin, but there was nothing exceptional in the abhorrence with which God regarded it. In us as in Adam, now as then, it is the abominable thing which He hates; and no words can describe its inherent vileness, or the utter ruin in which it must issue if not pardoned and effaced by the blood of Christ.

4. A fourth lesson is the duty of self-dedication to God. When there was shown to Christ a Roman penny, having on it the image of Cæsar, He drew the inference that as it bore the image of Cæsar so it should be paid to Cæsar: "Give to Cæsar," He said, "the things that are Cæsar's."

Well, God has made man in His image. All of you bear the image of God, however marred and mutilated it may be. Give then to God that which is God's. Give to Him what He has sealed as His own. Give to Him yourselves, those souls which are yourselves, and on which He has put His image. Sin, it is true, has marred and effaced that image; but God has never regarded sin as other than a wrong committed against Himself, and has never ceased to seek to undo what it has done, and restore what it took away. The whole plan of redemption through Jesus Christ, I have said, is one for the restoration with increased splendour of the Divine image in us, for the enlightenment of the understanding, the purification of the heart, and the direction of the will. Let us not be such enemies to ourselves as to refuse to concur in this glorious and gracious plan, but accept it with thankful joy, and act on it in humble reliance on the strength of the Spirit of God; and then we who have so long borne the image of the earthly will again be privileged to bear the image of the heavenly, for Christ Himself will be found in us the hope of glory. "Beloved, we are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he

The Parable of the Nobleman.

BY REV. MAURICE J. EVANS, B.A.

“A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return,” etc.—LUKE xix. 12–27.

IN this parable it is the design of our Lord to show forth His relationship to the world, as well as to His Church; while in the corresponding one (Matt. xxv.) delivered somewhat later to *His disciples*, He shadows forth His dealings with His Church alone. The title of nobility belongs to Him by human and Divine right. The epithet itself is ennobled in the lips of Him who is declared to be the “brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.” On the ground also of human ancestry it belongs to Him. He was the descendant “according to the flesh” of men who had walked with God, who had been even more illustrious by the purity and steadfastness of their faith than by the loftiness of the positions they were called to fill.

Yet it is on the personal dignity of His character that His true claim to the mediatorial kingdom rests. The lustre of Divine holiness, shining forth in the midst of suffering and of conflict, proclaimed Him of all the human race alone to be worthy to become “head over all things to the Church.” “Wherefore,” says the apostle, speaking of His obedience unto death, the death of the cross, “God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.”

The object of our Lord’s departure, the position assumed by men toward His kingdom, and the decision His return will bring with it, are the subjects touched upon in this parable.

I. *The purpose of our Lord’s departure, to receive for Himself a kingdom.*

His exaltation must be commensurate with the humili-

ation to which He had voluntarily submitted. His sufferings were a presage of the glory that should follow. Seated upon His heavenly throne, He awaits the accomplishment of the Father's purposes concerning Himself, presides over His Church, and renders all the forces of the world subservient to the progress and ultimate triumph of His kingdom.

We conceive of this kingdom—

1. *As afar off.* The path which leads thither “the vulture’s eye hath not seen; the lion’s whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.” Upon these realms shine other suns with undimmed splendour, upon them is shed the beauty of another spring, the glory of a fairer summer than we in this remote speck of creation have known. *Morally too* it is afar off. A world into which the discord of sin enters not, where the pang of remorse is not felt, the fire of temptation does not scorch, the blossoms of promise do not disappoint, is a world essentially different from anything with which our experience is familiar. It sparkles before us in the darkness, like those distant stars whose light reaches us, but the divergence of whose rays not even the most perfect instruments are able to measure.

2. *As made familiar* to our hope through Christ. “Our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven” is the apostle’s declaration, in the name of all believers. No loved name on earth calls forth the home feelings awakened within the Christian’s heart by the name of his heavenly fatherland. Our most hallowed, most enduring affections gather round it. The earliest and latest aspirations of the new life are directed towards it.

3. *As a kingdom to which the believer quickly passes.* He who spoke to the penitent malefactor the words, “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise,” will speak in turn the same promise to each of His children. No dark untrodden valleys, no pathless mountains lie between the believer and his home. The clouds which hid the receding Saviour from the view of His disciples

formed no obstacle to the reunion of those disciples with Himself. For the Christian, to depart is to be with Christ.

II. Christ's claims, during His absence, are in great measure disregarded.

1. Many have entirely denied His kingly authority. "His citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us." Judæa and Galilee, the land of patriarchs and prophets, the scene of His mighty works, the object of His unwearied love and compassion, refused to acknowledge Him as the promised Messiah. His compassion and love were rewarded with hatred and persecution. The daughter of Zion had no other crown for her King than the crown of thorns, no other throne than the cross of shame. In the final choice between Jesus Barabbas and Jesus which is called the Christ, the Jewish people chose the robber, and condemned the Prince of glory to death.

From the Gentile nations arose the same cry when the gospel was preached to them. 'The hatred which the Jews had concentrated upon Christ was now directed against His heralds. Greece in the pride of her intellect, and Rome in the pride of her power, turned away with contempt from the doctrine of the crucified and risen Lord. Everywhere was heard the impatient exclamation, "We will not have this man to reign over us."

Through eighteen centuries in like manner the same cry has gone up to heaven from every worldly heart, as it has measured the claims of Jesus against the attractions of its idols—wealth, honour, pleasure, ease. The response of the world to a Saviour who imposes the cross of self-denial, as the first condition of allegiance to His kingdom, has ever in effect been, "We will not have this man to reign over us."

2. Not all His professed servants manifest becoming fidelity in His service.

In the Master's house, even on earth, there are many servants, some called to more distinguished service,

others to less, but all placed in positions of trust. Life, health, powers of mind and body, time, opportunities, influence, possessions, are so many deposits, to be improved by being put to good use for Christ. The sum entrusted, proportioned to the capacity of each, and therefore represented by Luke as equal in every case, is in the hands of one five talents, of another two, of another one. Yet even amongst these favoured servants we find at least one, and that one of whom comparatively little was required, betraying the trust reposed in him by his kind and gracious Master.

III. Christ's return is a period of supreme decision.

1. It is the return in triumph of the rejected Saviour to the scene of His conflict and suffering. It is the coming of creation's King to receive the homage of all His subjects. It is the visible establishment in glory of the kingdom long down-trodden by the sons of darkness.

2. It is a time when His servants shall be called to places of honour. "Then he commanded these servants to be called unto him," etc. Faithful to Him in time of trial, they are to enter into their Master's joy, the joy of His success. Faithful in a lowly position, their powers are now to find a wider field for their exercise. The administration of the household is to give place to the administration of states. They are made kings and priests unto God, and shall reign with Him on the earth. Not all are raised to positions of equal influence—to the one ten cities, to another five, etc.; but only he who made the obscurity of his condition an excuse for indolence or indifference, who buried in a life of sloth the gift that was in him, shall be excluded from the honours of his Lord. Not for want of opportunities, but for want of faithfulness in the opportunities he has, is he rejected.

3. It is a time when the enemies of Christ shall receive the merited punishment. Strange that any should be the foes of such a king, and stranger still that such should be found in the ranks of His rightful subjects. Yet the "enemies of the cross of Christ" are unhappily not yet

an extinct class. The message of grace and love has been delivered to them in vain; the offer of more than an amnesty, of a perfect pardon and restoration, has been contemptuously rejected by them. Declared enemies of light, of holiness, and of the Redeemer, they have chosen to brave the anger of the King. The work of mercy is for them exhausted. Nothing remains to impede the course of Divine justice, to arrest the descent of the sword of God's wrath. In the execution of a righteous sentence, the King exclaims, "Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."

CHRIST AND OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.—The Old Testament *calls for* Christ on behalf of Israel, all nations, every broken heart, every contrite spirit; and it *proclaims Him* as the light of the Gentiles, the consolation of Israel, the solace of all that mourn. He who has learnt to feel this will ever more clearly perceive that the significance of the Old Testament for the Christian lies not merely in the sparse collection of prophetic passages, which are only preserved and are of importance to support and confirm the truth of the New Testament: but that he has here before him the long impressive lesson of all that a sinful humanity, a sinful nation, a sinful heart, must learn and experience about God and itself, before it feels the need of, before it is able to receive, the perfect consolation it finds only in Christ—in Christ, the Divinely appointed culminating point, on account of whom the history of humanity describes all its revolutions, passes through all its mysterious developments, to find after forty centuries in Him its turning point, and henceforth to pursue its way in an entirely new sphere—. . . in Christ, for whom the heart must learn to call and long, at the closed gates of paradise, amidst the waters of the flood, in the parched wilderness, in the dreary captivity, out of the depth and darkness, in order afterwards to have in Him the "great joy," and the light which is "the life of men."—NICHOLAS BEETS.

The Gospel according to Mark.

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. J. H. GODWIN.

BOOK I.

Introduction, and Ministry in Galilee.

PART III.

Ministry in Galilee, to the close.

Div. V. *Return to Galilee.* (IX. 2-32.)

² And after six days Jesus took away Peter and James and John, and led them up to a high mountain, apart by

Sec.
Transf
ration

Div. V. (Chap. ix. 2-32.) The transfiguration of Christ being separated from the confession of St. Peter by the interval of a week, it cannot be inferred that these events were in the same district. No mention is made of the return to Galilee, either before or after; but the statements which follow show that the return preceded. For, on descending from the mountain, Jesus found the Jewish scribes disputing with the disciples; and Galilee is described as the country in which they already *were*, and not as that to which they afterwards *went*. There are three connected sections,—the vision on the mount, the cure of a demoniac on the morrow, and the second prediction of His death.

Sec. I. (Mark ix. 2-13; Matt. xvii. 1-13; Luke ix. 28-36.) After the declaration of the death of Jesus, the account of His appearance in glory follows. These scenes are in striking *contrast*; but the latter may be regarded as a *consequence* of the purpose expressed in the former, and a *preparation* for the event then predicted. Probably on the evening of the following sabbath, Jesus took three disciples, and went with them by night to some lofty hill. There they slept, while He continued in prayer. When they woke they found they were not alone, but Moses and Elijah were conversing with Jesus. They were bright, but His appearance was as the brightness of the sun. They spoke with Him concerning His approaching departure; and as the disciples heard the discourse, Peter expressed his delight, and his desire to render some service. Suddenly a cloud covered

themselves. ³ And His appearance was changed before them ; and His garments became glittering, very white

them, and they were filled with awe at this special sign of the Divine presence. They heard a voice from heaven, directing them to the Son of God. Overcome with fear, they lay prostrate on the ground till Jesus touched them and encouraged them. Then looking up, they saw that He alone was with them. Descending from the hill, they were told to keep to themselves for a time what they had witnessed. In reply to their inquiry respecting Elijah, whose disappearance they could not reconcile with the received interpretation of Scripture, they were told that the prophecy respecting Elijah had been fulfilled in the person of John the Baptist. St. Luke adds some details not given by the other evangelists, but omits the conversation respecting Elijah. The narratives of St. Mark and St. Matthew agree more closely than usual ; but there are still the differences, verbal and real, which prove that the writers could not have copied one from another, nor have derived their narratives entirely from one source. The testimonies are independent, and cannot be resolved into one. The number of witnesses to this event makes delusion impossible, and their character precludes the supposition of deception. The testimony of the three evangelists is confirmed by that of St. Peter (2 Pet. i. 18). The brightness upon the face of Moses, recorded Exod. xxxiv. 29 and referred to 2 Cor. iii. 7, has some resemblance to what is here related ; but it could not have produced a myth respecting Jesus, with the characteristics of this narrative ; so simple in form and moral in purpose, presenting such views of the perfection of Jesus and the imperfection of the apostles. The supposition that the light seen by the apostles was the reflection of the rising sun, and that Moses and Elijah were two unknown disciples, is not an interpretation of the narrative, but a contradiction. The re-appearance of the dead can be regarded as an impossibility only by those who deny their existence ; and the glory in which they appeared may be merely what is natural in a higher state. Such a manifestation of the invisible would be most improbable, if the occasion were not such as to render it highly proper. This event, like all the miracles of Jesus Christ, was both a Divine attestation to His mission, and a symbol of His glory, of which no material splendour could be more than a sign. What was seen, and what was heard, were primarily for the three apostles, to strengthen their faith when they should behold the subsequent humiliation of their Lord. Ultimately, they were for all ; adding to other evidences that of the Divine Voice, and supplying a form in which all disciples might think of their Lord, in addition to that given by the general history. There was also in this scene a symbolical representation

as snow ; like it no fuller on the earth can whiten. ⁴ And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses ; and they were conversing with Jesus. ⁵ And Peter speaking said to Jesus, Rabbi, it is well for us to be here : and let us make three tents, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. ⁶ For he did not know what to say, for they were filled with awe.

⁷ And a cloud appeared overshadowing them ; and a voice came from the cloud, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON :

of the union of the Mosaic with the Christian system, and of the subordination of the former ; and also of the association of all the redeemed with Christ, in the glory of His heavenly kingdom.

² The interval was a week, which might be described as after six, or eight days, the reckoning being exclusive or inclusive of the sabbaths (John xx. 26). St. Luke says that it was after eight days, and that Jesus withdrew to the mountain for prayer. The same disciples were selected to accompany Him on two other occasions (v. 37 ; xiv. 33). There is no reason for supposing that the mountain was Tabor, on the top of which there was a town and fortress.

³ The description has some resemblance to that given Dan. x. 6 ; Rev. i. 14.

⁴ St. Luke states that the subject of their conversation was His departure, which is described as an exodus ; and of the apostles he says, that their eyes had been heavy with sleep. The legislator, and the reformer, of the Jewish nation were permitted now to see Him, to whose coming they looked forward, and of whose greater works theirs were typical and preparatory. (Deut. xviii. 15 ; Heb. iii. 5.) On some other occasion during the life of Jesus, not noticed in the history, the same privilege seems to have been given to the father of the Jewish nation. Of Abraham our Lord said, that he not only rejoiced that he *should see* the day of the Messiah, but that *he did see* this and was glad. The first statement refers to the joy of anticipation, and the second to the gladness of hope fulfilled (John viii. 56). All the patriarchs are said to have looked forward to the future ; and the redeemed of all ages unite in the same song of praise. (Heb. xi. 13, 40 ; Rev. i. 5 ; v. 9.)

⁷ The cloud is noticed as a sign of the Divine presence (Exod. xx. 21 ; xl. 34 ; 1 Kings viii. 10). The testimony is similar to that given at the baptism of Christ, with the additional precept.

HEAR HIM. ⁸ And suddenly looking around, they no longer saw any one, but Jesus only with themselves.

⁹ Now as they were descending from the mountain, He directed them that they should not relate to any what they had seen, but when the Son of Man has risen from the dead. ¹⁰ And they observed the direction, seeking among themselves, what the rising from the dead was.

¹¹ And they asked Him saying, Wherefore do the scribes declare that Elijah must come first? ¹² Then in

⁹ What was witnessed was *seen* only by three, and for a time it was not to be declared to any; but it does not appear that this was an advantage given to a few, and withheld from others. If in some respects it was an advantage to have seen the miracles of Christ, and therefore to have had faith in Him, in some respects it is an advantage to have faith in Him, without having seen them (John xx. 29). It is better to know some things by hearing than by seeing; and better not to hear of some things, till others connected with them can be known also. The impression made on the senses by visible objects is involuntary, and the lessons thus forced on the mind are limited. What is *seen* is always of less value than what is *suggested*. As that which is presented to the senses is lessened, that which is apprehended by the mind increases in extent, elevation, purity, and moral power.

¹¹ The prophecy of Malachi, iv. 5, which mentions the name of Elijah, was understood literally and wrongly. It was fulfilled in the person of John the Baptist, who came with the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke i. 17), but who was not what the Jews expected, Elijah himself (John i. 21). Jesus declared that this prophecy was accomplished in the person and ministry of John, and He said nothing of any other fulfilment in the future (Matt. xi. 14; xvii. 13). The restoration attributed to him is the recall of the Jewish people, from the wrong teaching and practices of later times, to the earlier and better lessons of the law and the prophets. Thus he prepared the way of the Lord, by whom all the promises will be fulfilled (Acts iii. 21). The typical character of the Old Testament would increase the common metaphorical usage of names. The names of David and Israel are used in predictions respecting Christ and the Christian Church.

¹² In reply to the question of the disciples, Jesus first declared that the *prophecy* was true; and then, by another question, led them to see that the *interpretation* to which they referred was false. The scribes disregarded

reply He said to them, Elijah indeed coming first does restore all things. And how is it written respecting the Son of man, that He should suffer much, and be despised? ¹³ But I declare to you, that Elijah also has come; and they did to him what they chose; even as it is written respecting him.

¹⁴ And coming to the disciples, He saw much people around them, and scribes questioning with them. ¹⁵ And

Sec. I
Cure of
Demoni

all the predictions respecting the sufferings of Christ, and were equally wrong in their opinions respecting the messenger who was to precede Him.

¹⁸ The prediction referred to was not only true, but it had been accomplished, and other predictions also. There is no special prophecy in the Old Testament of the sufferings of John; but these were included in all the general indications of the suffering which is appointed for the servants of God, and especially for those who are called to the highest service.

Special manifestations of favour attend entire submission to the Divine will.

Outward splendour is the proper accompaniment of inward excellence.

Christ is attested to men as the object of Divine approval and delight.

Therefore they should love and trust, honour and obey Him.

First lessons are to be retained, that further may be received.

Prophecy teaches that suffering belongs to the present service of God.

Sec. II. (Mark ix. 14-29; Matt. xvii. 14-21; Luke ix. 37-43.) When Jesus and the three disciples descended from the mount on the next day, they found a multitude of people with the other disciples. Some scribes were disputing with them; and there was a man who had brought a

directly all the people seeing Him were amazed, and running forward they saluted Him. ¹⁶ And He asked the scribes, What are you seeking with them? ¹⁷ And one of the people in reply said, Teacher, I brought to Thee my son who has a dumb spirit. ¹⁸ And wherever it seizes him, it dashes him; and he foams, and gnashes his teeth, and wastes away. And I spoke to Thy disciples that they should cast it out; and they had not power. ¹⁹ But He answering him said, O people without faith! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him unto Me.

²⁰ And they brought him to Him. And seeing Him, the spirit directly convulsed him: and falling on the ground, he rolled foaming. ²¹ And He questioned his

demoniac child, that he might be healed. The disciples had attempted the cure, but they had failed; their faith not being sufficient to awaken the requisite faith in him who sought their help, in the absence of their Lord. The application was now made to Him. He first expressed regret and censure for the want of faith apparent in all; and then, having required and produced faith in the father, He restored health to the child. When the disciples afterwards asked the cause of their failure, they were told that it was from their want of faith, and that this resulted from self-indulgence and the neglect of prayer.

¹⁴ St. Luke states that this was on the next day after the ascent.

¹⁵ The wonder of the people was occasioned by the sudden and opportune appearance of Jesus, not by any supernatural glory. Of this no mention is made; it would rather have deterred than attracted the multitude, as it was with Moses (Exod. xxxiv. 30); and the supposition is inconsistent with the silence respecting the glory they had seen, which the disciples were directed to observe.

¹⁹ St. Matthew and St. Luke give the full expression,—O people faithless and perverse: a description corresponding to that given by Moses, and alluded to by St. Paul (Deut. xxxii. 5, 20; Phil. ii. 15). The scribes are especially referred to, and the people generally, but not the apostles. The words of Jesus express censure and compassion, but no impatience.

²¹ This part of the conversation is related only by St. Mark. The inquiry

father, How long is the time, it has been as this with him ? Then he said, From childhood. ²² And often it has cast him into fire, and into water, to destroy him. But if Thou canst do anything, help us, having pity on us. ²³ Then Jesus said to him, If thou canst have faith—All things are possible to one who has faith. ²⁴ And directly the father of the child, crying out said with tears, I have faith, Lord ; give help to my want of faith.

²⁵ Then Jesus seeing that a multitude was running forward together, rebuked the evil spirit, saying to it, Thou spirit, dumb and deaf, I order thee, Come out from him, and no more enter into him. ²⁶ And crying out and convulsing him much, it came out. And he became as dead ; so that many said, He is dead. ²⁷ But Jesus taking hold of him by the hand, raised him, and he stood up.

²⁸ And when He entered into a house, His disciples questioned Him privately, Wherefore were we not able

was not to obtain information, but to manifest sympathy and love, which, with the following declaration, would inspire confidence. Similar is the conduct described on other occasions (v. 9 ; vii. 33 ; viii. 23).

²³ The want of faith was shown in the words, If thou canst do anything ; and to them the words refer which introduce the statement respecting the sufficiency of faith. The preceding article separates the clause. (Luke i. 62 ; xxii. 37.)

²⁷ St. Luke says that He healed the child, who was an only son, and restored him to his father ; and that the people were astonished at the greatness of the power of God, shown in this and the other miracles of Jesus.

²⁸ When the twelve apostles and the seventy disciples were sent forth to their special mission, they received authority to cure diseases and cast out demons ; and apparently they used this power, for all who had faith to seek from them Divine help. But they did no miracles in the presence of Jesus, nor while in attendance upon Him. Subsequently, the power of healing which was possessed by them and by other disciples was subject to further restriction. They could not cure all sickness, and did not make the at-

to cast it out? ²⁹ And He said to them, This kind in none can go out, unless with prayer and fasting.

Sec. III. ³⁰ And coming forth thence, they journeyed on through
and Galilee; and He was not willing that any should know
fiction it; ³¹ for He was instructing His disciples.
death.

tempt. Sometimes, but not always, miraculous cures would conduce to the progress of the gospel: these occasions were discerned by faith, and only in such cases was the power to be exercised. Here there was such an occasion, if the condition always required—the faith of the applicant—were not wanting. The application was made to the disciples, because of the absence of Jesus, and was probably without faith, merely an experiment. The disciples were not entirely without faith, or they would not have attempted the cure; but they had not sufficient faith, or they would have discerned the impediment, and have removed it, even as their Lord did.

²⁹ The statement must refer to the disciples, and not to the sick child; for these means were not prescribed to him. St. Matthew gives the reply more completely, referring to their want of faith and to the power of faith. The distinction made is between *demons* and *diseases*, and not between one order of evil spirits and another. The latter *might* depart from merely natural causes, but not the former.

Faith, when feeble, becomes less, through association with those who have none.

When strong it is communicative, and inspires faith in the minds of others.

Faith is the condition both of doing and receiving the highest good.

It is preserved and promoted by communion with God.

SEC. III. (Mark ix. 30–32; Matt. xvii. 22, 23; Luke ix. 43–45.) This division ends as the preceding, with another prediction of the death and resurrection of Jesus. That was spoken near Cæsarea Philippi, this in Galilee; that declared His rejection by the Jewish rulers, this refers to the will of God. In the third prediction reference is made to the Romans. The lesson now given was for the disciples alone. The publicity, which had before been avoided among the Gentiles, was now avoided among the Jews; partly, it might be, to prevent the opposition of the Pharisees, and the

And He declared to them, The Son of Man is given up into the hands of men, and they will kill Him ; and when killed, on the third day He will rise again. ³² But they understood not the statement, and were afraid to question Him.

Div. VI. *Conversations in Capernaum.* (IX. 33-50.)

³³ And He came to Capernaum. And being in the house He questioned them, What did you discuss among
Sec.
Lesson
against
Pride.

political excitement of the people ; and partly, to continue the lessons of instruction, which even the disciples could not fully receive.

³¹ Jesus was given up by Judas to the priests (xiv. 10) ; by them to Pilate (xv. 1) ; by him to the soldiers (xv. 15) ; and He was given up by the will of God into the hands of wicked men to be crucified (xiv. 41). The same term is used in all these cases. Here the reference is to the Divine will ; men in general being mentioned (Rom. iv. 25 ; viii. 22 ; Acts ii. 23.)

³² Their misunderstanding of Old Testament prophecies prevented their understanding the predictions of Jesus. The plain signification of His words, being contrary to their interpretation of Scripture, was set aside as impossible, and a wrong meaning was attributed to them. They knew that something was declared different from their hopes ; and they were afraid that truths still more unwelcome might be stated, if explanation was sought ; and that they might subject themselves to censure, as on former occasions, by expressing ignorance and opposition (vii. 18 ; viii. 21, 33).

The will of God should be seen, even in the wickedness of men.

Unwelcome truths need to be repeated, but are not for all.

Div. VI. (Chap. ix. 33-50.) The account of the first period of the ministry in Galilee ends with the mission of the apostles ; that of the second period concludes with instructions given to them in Capernaum. St. Matthew relates a preceding incident, and does not mention the statement of St. John, by which the two parts of the conversation are here separated. This is given by St. Luke, who does not relate the second conversation, but concludes his narrative of the ministry in Galilee with several events of similar

yourselves on the road? ³⁴ But they were silent; for with one another they had disputed on the road, who was superior?

³⁵ And when seated, He called the twelve and said to them, If any one chooses to be first, he will be last of all, and servant of all. ³⁶ And taking a child, He placed

significance. The lessons on humility and love which were expressed in the words of Jesus were exhibited in His conduct, and show the spirit in which He went forward to suffering and death.

SEC. I. (Mark ix. 33-37; Matt. xviii. 1-5; Luke ix. 46-48.) From the journey in Galilee, when publicity was avoided, Jesus and the disciples returned, for the last time, to Capernaum. St. Matthew states that on their arrival a tax was demanded, from which exemption might have been properly claimed, but which was paid to prevent offence, though the money had to be obtained miraculously. Then the three evangelists relate a conversation of Jesus with the apostles, occasioned by their ambition. They had been disputing respecting their right to precedence in the kingdom soon to be established, and may have agreed to refer the decision to Jesus. But before they spoke to Him, their inquiry was anticipated by His question. In His presence they were ashamed to bring forward their *personal* controversy,—Which of them might be superior (Luke ix. 46), and most were silent. But some, either with more or less sensibility than the rest, proposed to Him a *general* question,—Who is superior in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. xviii. 1)? He replied both by word and action; first placing a little child in their midst, and telling them that he who had most of the lowliness and teachableness of the child would be the superior in His kingdom: and then taking the child to His arms, He taught them that by copying His love for such they would serve Him and honour their Father in heaven. St. Matthew gives the reproof of the apostles before the reply to their question, and St. Luke reverses the order of the two lessons here given; but the three narratives evidently refer to one event. The question of the disciples, the answer given them, and the introduction of the child, with the twofold lesson, are alike in all.

³⁴ All were silent at first, but afterwards some spoke. The distinction that had been recently made (ix. 2) may have given rise to the dispute. It did not cease now, but was subsequently renewed (x. 41; Luke xxii. 24).

³⁵ To be last is the way to become first (Matt. xviii. 4; Mark x. 44).

³⁶ The two actions are mentioned together; but the first is connected with the preceding lesson, and the second with that which follows. The

it in their midst. And putting His arms round it, He said to them, ³⁷ Whoever shall receive one of such children because of My name, receives Me: and whoever shall receive Me, receives not Me, but Him who sent Me.

³⁸ Then John spoke to Him, saying, Teacher, we saw one casting out demons in Thy name, who does not follow us; and we forbade him, because he does not follow us. ³⁹ But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no one who will do a work of power in My name, and be able readily to speak evil of Me. ⁴⁰ For he who is not

Sec.
Against
Unkind
ness.

child was placed in the midst of the apostles as an example of humility; Jesus took the child to His arms, being Himself the example of love.

The humility and trustfulness of children should be preserved by men.

They who have most power should render most service.

They who descend most in love will rise most in honour.

God is served by obedience to Christ, and Christ by kindness to the least and lowest who belong to Him.

SEC. II. (Mark ix. 38-50; Matt. xviii. 6-9; Luke ix. 49, 50.) By the lesson which they received from the words and actions of Jesus, the apostles were led to doubt the propriety of their own behaviour towards one, who was not associated with them, though he acknowledged the same Lord. Their conduct was related by St. John, and Jesus in reply directed them not to repeat it; stating two reasons for His rule, and so returning to their own dissensions and the want of love which occasioned their ambition. He then enjoined the self-denial which was requisite for the avoidance of everything hurtful to others. This admonition is repeated and enforced with peculiar earnestness and solemnity; first on the ground of common prudence, and then for the sake of a higher propriety.

³⁸ He not only attempted, but effected cures. Others failed (Acts xix. 13).

³⁹ He was probably a true disciple, though subsequently some who were not such had this power (Matt. vii. 22; 1 Cor. xiii. 2).

⁴⁰ This was a rule for *their* judgment on *actions*; those which were not

against you, is for you. ⁴¹ For whosoever shall give you to drink a cup of water in My name, because you are Christ's, assuredly I declare to you, he will not lose his reward.

⁴² And whoever shall ensnare one of these little ones who have faith in Me, better were it for him, if a millstone were fastened around his neck, and he cast into the sea. ⁴³ And if thy hand ensnare thee, cut it off: better is it for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go away to the pit,—to the unquenchable fire, ⁴⁴ where their worm ceases not, and the fire is not

adverse were favourable. On another occasion our Lord declared His judgment respecting *character*. In certain circumstances, to withhold acknowledgment is to declare opposition: "He that is not with me is against me" (Matt. xii. 30; Luke xi. 23). Both here, and in the parallel passage of St. Luke, the readings of MSS. vary; some having one pronoun, and some the other. But the preponderance of evidence in both is in favour of you. The preceding *us* (Luke ix. 49) would naturally lead to a change in the following verse; and the statement would by many be thought similar to the other declaration.

⁴¹ A similar declaration was before made (Matt. x. 42). The statement respecting the conduct of *others* towards them would suggest the similar lesson respecting *their own* conduct; and this leads to the following warnings against unkindness, which are *general*, referring to the conduct of all.

⁴² Similar admonitions are found in Matt. v. 29, 30, with a special reference to sins against chastity; and in Luke xvii. 2, respecting offences generally. The occasions are different, and such lessons would be often requisite, and were therefore repeated. Punishment by drowning was a Syrian practice.

⁴⁴ This verse and the 46th are wanting in some of the oldest MSS., and have been regarded as additions. But the repetition is *suitable* in speech, and seemingly *superfluous* in writing. It is therefore likely to have been omitted; and the more so, since the MSS. which omit these verses have many deficiencies. The imagery is similar to that of the prophet Isaiah (lxvi. 14), which is repeated Eccles. vii. 17. The corpses thrown to the mass of corruption in the valley of Hinnom, when all hope of life was gone and destruction was the only remedy for putrefaction, were not representations of perpetual pain, but of hopeless and irremediable ruin.

quenched. ⁴⁵ And if thy foot ensnare thee, cut it off: better is it that thou enter into life lame, than having two feet to be cast into the pit,—to the unquenchable fire, ⁴⁶ where their worm ceases not, and the fire is not quenched. ⁴⁷ And if thy eye ensnare thee, pluck it out: better is it for thee with one eye to enter into the kingdom of God, than having two eyes to be cast into the pit of fire, ⁴⁸ where their worm ceases not, and the fire is not quenched.

⁴⁹ For every one will be seasoned with fire; and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt. ⁵⁰ The salt is good; but if the salt should become insipid, with what will you flavour it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

⁴⁹ The preceding fire, which is that of punishment, must be referred to in this statement, but not exclusively. There is a fire which purifies, as well as a fire that destroys. The fire is not, as the salt, always good and only for some. The first statement is general, of every man,—not every one who does not renounce sin, nor every one who does. Every man will be seasoned with fire,—either purified or destroyed. Of the former, the action of fire is a figure (Mal. iii. 3; 1 Pet. i. 7; iv. 12), and of the latter (Matt. iii. 12; v. 22; xiii. 42). But there is an influence wholly and always good, of which the salt of ancient sacrifices was a sign. They who would be holy must be consecrated with that which is contrary to all corruption, but is ever agreeable to men and acceptable to God,—the wisdom which is love and power. Salt was required for every sacrifice (Lev. ii. 13; Ezek. xliii. 24). It was the symbol of a pervasive, beneficial, and spiritual power (Matt. v. 13; Luke xiv. 34; Col. iv. 6). It is the wisdom which is from above (Jas. iii. 17, 18). St. Matthew gives a shorter account of this part of the discourse; but he adds other subsequent conversations, which belong to the same day, and form, with the preceding, the conclusion of the ministry in Galilee.

All who acknowledge Christ and do good in His name should help one another.

They commit great sin who willingly occasion sin in others.

Every present loss should be preferred to the practice of any wrong.

Suffering is requisite for the removal of sin, and wisdom for the service of God.

[The Divine knowledge and power, kindness and goodness, of Jesus Christ, are described in this part, as in the preceding; and some signs of His Divine authority are given, of a more striking character than any before recorded. The spirituality of the kingdom of God, and the self-denial required of His disciples, are more fully set forth. But the history of this period of the Saviour's life is most distinguished by the intimations now given of His death, and by the extension of His ministry to the Gentiles. From the time of His return to Galilee, after the feast of Purim, to His departure at the feast of tabernacles, He was pursued by the Pharisees, and driven to exile or concealment. His instructions were therefore generally in private; and to the disciples He repeated the lessons respecting humility, and faith, and love, which declared the motives of His own conduct and the principles of His kingdom. Verbal statements are explained and confirmed by the facts recorded. These show that Jesus was the Son of God, whom all should hear; the Christ, who would reign for ever, and whose death was for the salvation of the world.]

Outlines.

Threefold Encouragement.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace."—HEB. iv. 15, 16.

WE have here a threefold encouragement to come to the throne of grace.

I. We have an High-priest *able to sympathise with our infirmities*. Christ had a human nature, and therefore human sympathies. Depraved as our nature is, yet is the fountain of sympathy not entirely dried up within it. Where is the man worthy of the name of man who hesitates running to the relief of distress when its accents reach his ear? Those neighbourly kindnesses which the strong show to the weak, the healthy to the sick, are proof that there is still something in human nature, defective and depraved as it now is, that makes the whole world kin.

And if fallen ruined human nature respond to the cry of weakness, how much more the perfect humanity of the Son of Man! In Him the fountain of perfect human feeling and sympathy had the freest and fullest play. Although the Son of God, He was also Son of Man; though the Priest, He was also the Brother: "come therefore with boldness," etc.

II. We have encouragement to come boldly to the throne of grace, from the fact that *He was in all points tempted as we are*. He had not merely a human nature in common with us, He also passed through an experience like ours. In a common experience there is a bond of union beyond that of mere fellow-feeling. Comrades in arms who have fought side by side in the same campaigns, seamen who have weathered the same storms and fought in the same engagements, are drawn closely

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the woman accused of adultery, and desired that she be stoned, His significant reply to them was, "Let him who is without sin among you cast the first stone at me." "Wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" said he to the disciples when they met with a little opposition. That was the question of sinful men. "Ye know what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of man is come to destroy men's lives, but to save them," was the reply of Him who was without sin. The limit of patience on the part of sinful men was "seven times: not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times," was the spirit of the sinless Jesus.

Five.

D. L.

Justification by Faith.

justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. v. 1.

The doctrine of justification by faith is the heart of the Gospel. Accepted by the Church, it gives strength and vitality. "It was," says a man of learning and good writing of the Reformation, "the growth and foundation of one positive dogma, justification by faith, which broke down and crushed successively the various errors of the Romish Church." (Hallam's "History of Literature.") Accepted by any soul, it gives life and

Consider:—I. Justification. II. Its instrument—faith. Its result—peace. Justification.

To justify, in Scripture, signifies always to count just or declare righteous. God is justified when He is shown to be righteous or shown to be just. "Against thee, O Lord, have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight: thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and thou shalt prevail when thou judgest" (Ps. li. 4). The justifica-

tion of God is not the infusion of righteousness into Him, but the manifestation or acknowledgment of His righteousness. The justification of man by God is His counting man as righteous. Romans viii. 33 contrasts justification with condemnation, not purification; "It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" In all other places the word has the same or a similar meaning (acknowledged by Dr. Newman in his "Lectures on Justification").

1. Justification includes (1) freedom from guilt, and (2) Divine acceptance. Not freedom from guilt alone, for the irrational animals who are incapable of moral good or evil are free from guilt.

2. Justification by the just Judge is always grounded on obedience to law. Justice and judgment are the pillars of God's throne. Perfect love in the Supreme Ruler is absolute justice, the failure of which would involve the misery and ruin of creation. The law is holy, just, and good; therefore the holy, just, and good God must enforce and execute it. Inadequate and perverted ideas prevail regarding the inflexibility of the Divine ministration of justice according to law. These dishonour God the lawgiver, and ruin men, His subjects, whose sense of guilt is weakened, whose hopes rest on a false view of Divine compassion, and whose feeling of the need of an atoning sacrifice is enfeebled. Indication of a salutary reaction against prevailing laxity may be seen in the words of one of the popular writers of the day: "So runs many a proverb, so confirms the unerring decree of a just God, who would not be a just God did He allow Himself to break His own righteous laws for the government of the universe, did He falsify the requirements of His own holy and pure being by permitting any other wages of sin than death."

3. Justification rests either on the ground of personal obedience or righteousness, or on the ground of the accepted obedience of another in our place. In either case the obedience to law must be absolute and perfect

in doing or suffering its penalty. (1) Personal obedience justifies the unfallen angels. It cannot justify sinful men. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20). Sincere obedience, imperfect obedience, reformation, or repentance is utterly incapable of justifying. Illustration from ministration of human law, which as far as it is pure is the reflection of that of God. Should juries acquit criminals proved guilty of one kind of offence because they were not guilty of another (that is on the ground of imperfect obedience), or because they intended to behave better in future (that is on the ground of repentance), authority and social order would perish, vice be honoured, and virtue punished; yet confident hopes of acceptance with God and salvation are often built on principles which would involve God's dishonour and the misery of His moral world. (2) The obedience and suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ, accepted in our place, justifies sinners. No created being had the right to place a substitute for himself before the throne of justice. The great Judge alone had the right to appoint and accept the freely offered service, in obeying and suffering in our room, of His Son our Saviour. He has used this sovereign right. Jesus Christ, God's Son, in our nature has obeyed and suffered; "on him was laid the iniquity of us all." "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13; Rom. iii. 24-26, etc.) That God has accepted our Saviour is proved by His resurrection from the dead (Rom. iv. 25).

II. The instrument of justification—faith.

Faith is trust in Jesus as the Son of God and Saviour of the world. Substitution to be effectual requires not only the acceptance of the Saviour for us by the Judge of all, but the acceptance by the sinner of the Saviour as his Substitute. Faith is that acceptance on the part of sinners. It might have been supposed that no difficulty

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but pardon through satisfaction of justice can give relief. Endeavours, tears, sorrows are vain. Nothing can satisfy the sense of justice in that state of mind to which every man's conscience is aiming, but trust in the justice-satisfying Saviour. That gives peace and joy.

“ My heart for gladness springs,
It cannot more be sad ;
For very joy it laughs and sings,
Sees nought but sunshine glad.
The sun that glads mine eyes
Is Christ the Lord I love ;
I sing for joy of that which lies
Stored up for me above.”

Colinsburgh.

J. C. J.

A Sketch of a Harvest Sermon.

“ Then shall the earth yield her increase.”—Ps. lxxvii. 6.

IN the word of God many a reference have we to the happy period which we are taught is yet in store for our world. Prophets and apostles alike predict it, and describe it in glowing terms.

Our text may be regarded as among the passages of holy Scripture which refer to this happy period. The psalm evidently contemplates the whole world, and in a state which does not yet exist, but which is to be brought about in the way the psalm describes. See ver. 1-5.

I. We may understand it of the material or physical increase of the earth.

This perhaps is the primary reference of the text. The increase of the earth is very various and rich. There are all the fruits of the earth, the vegetable productions. There are all the living creatures, the animals, which depend for their existence upon the vegetable creation. There are all the riches of the earth beside, which may be reckoned among the earth's increase. Thus the psalmist sings, “ The earth is full of thy riches, so is

this great and wide sea," etc. (Ps. civ. 24, 25); and see Job xxviii. 1-6 for the other riches.

Upon these things the happiness of man very much depends. Without them indeed, in his present state, he cannot exist, and to much privation and suffering is he exposed with but a scanty supply. On the other hand, a rich and large supply may conduce greatly to the happiness of the people, in all their wants being supplied, in all conveniences being ministered to, and in their being surrounded with material luxuries and splendours.

Now the text looks forward to a period when this shall largely be the case, when the increase of the earth shall be full and complete. "Then shall the earth yield *her increase*," i.e. her own proper increase, what she was designed to yield, or what under God's blessing she may be brought to yield. This is "her increase." That she has always yielded this cannot be maintained; for scarcity, dearth, sterility, barrenness, famine have been but too common in the world. The fruitful field has failed, the fertile country has become barren, when God has withheld the rain and the dew, or sent "blasting and mildew" upon the land; while many parts of the earth have been perpetually barren. How different it would be if all the earth at all times yielded all the increase of which she is capable. This has never yet been done. Eden bloomed for a while, and it was perhaps a promise of what all the earth to man might become. But Eden was confined to a little spot, and soon passed away, and thorns and thistles became the inheritance of man. But when this state of things shall be changed, when the curse shall have passed away and the earth shall "*yield her increase*," what riches and what loveliness will adorn and bless the earth and all her inhabitants! Poverty will no more be felt; scarcity will be unknown. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more," etc. (Rev. vii. 16, 17.)

II. But we consider the text in reference to the spiritual increase of the earth. The earth was not

made for itself; and its material increase was for another. The earth was prepared for man; and he was introduced into the world, its crown and king, capable of knowing, recognising, and acknowledging the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Creator in all the works of His hands. To do this was the end of man's existence, even "*to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever;*" and it was the highest end of the material creation to contribute to this glory of the Creator, and to this happiness of His creature man.

Thus from man the spiritual increase of the earth was to arise—from man to God, and for man's highest good. And from man it shall yet arise, notwithstanding that he has forgotten his God and fallen into ignorance and sin. God's great salvation shall prevail on earth, and bring man back to the knowledge and love of Himself in Jesus Christ, even as ver. 1, 2 of this psalm tell us. "*Then shall the earth yield her increase,*" her spiritual and material together; and taking the psalm as our guide, we may see several of the particulars in which that spiritual increase will consist.

1. There will be *a reverent and befitting acknowledgment of God's majesty.* "*All the ends of the earth shall fear him,*" ver. 7. How fitting is this on the part of an intelligent creature like man, towards the almighty and all-wise Creator! And when "*all the ends of the earth*" shall thus pay Him His due, how large a portion of her spiritual increase will the earth thus yield!

2. There will be *the revenue of praise* which is God's due. "*Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee,*" ver. 5; and the verse is repeated from ver. 3, it is the refrain of the psalm. And one day the prayer which it expresses will be answered. With the fear of His name, from the ends of the earth will ascend His praise. How much is there in the material increase of the earth, how much in man's redemption, to call forth praise! And one day the praise will be uttered, fully uttered, for both.

3. The psalm predicts *the prevalence of God's kingdom on earth*. "Thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth," ver. 4. Surely in that happy state of things, when it shall perfectly prevail, the earth's spiritual increase will be yielded unto God. What peace, what harmony, what security are there in the prevalence of the heavenly kingdom, in the glorious government of God!

4. The psalm speaks of *the joy and gladness of the people then*, ver. 4, "*O let the nations be glad and sing for joy.*" Surely they will do so when God's kingdom shall come, and just in proportion as it prevails. And the gladness and joy of the redeemed earth will be a part of the sweetest increase which will ascend to the Creator. Hear the swelling sounds of joy and gladness from all the redeemed earth!

5. There will be *the harvest of redeemed souls*. This will be more than the fear, and the praise, and the obedience, and the gladness of the people in the earth's spiritual increase. "The redemption of the soul is precious." It is beyond all price. It is dearer to God than all besides, than all that can come from it. Oh! how glorious a harvest of souls will at last be gathered in, when "the ends of the earth shall fear him," when "his way shall be known upon earth," etc., ver. 2. "Then shall the earth yield her increase"—her own proper, highest increase, for which she was designed and is continued in existence.

Such was the glorious vision before the psalmist's mind. How wonderful to contemplate it in the double aspect in which we have now viewed it: a lost world redeemed, fearing, serving, praising, and rejoicing in God its Saviour; and the material creation made in unknown riches to minister to the glory of the redemption!

Broadway.

J. BENNETT.

Christian Character.

“Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”—Acts xxvi. 28.

THIS passage suggests the following important truths.

I. That man's character is not naturally Christian. Agrippa acknowledges himself not a Christian, by confessing that he was “almost persuaded” to be one. And in this respect he is but a type-man. To be Christian is to be Christ-like. It is to possess Christ's mind, to be robed in His purity, and to be animated by the same principle that throbbed, and throbs still, in His large philanthropic heart. That man's natural state is widely different from this is evident:—1. from consciousness; 2. from observation; 3. from Scripture. Man may be a great deal; he may be a philosopher, a senator, a moralist, or, like Agrippa, a king, and still not be a Christian.

II. That to become Christian should be man's supreme aim. “Seek *first* the kingdom of God,” etc.—1. Because it is God's will that he should be Christian. 2. Because he has every privilege of becoming Christian—Divine influences, the Bible, the moral suasion of God's servants, opportunity, etc. 3. Because his becoming Christian is essential to his own future happiness. 4. Because only thus can he realize the true end of his being: man's supreme aim may be to get knowledge, to amass wealth, to obtain power, or gratify his senses and appetites; but each or all of these are unworthy his supreme love, and they will *all* fail to supply his moral wants or minister to the well-being of his spirit. Christianity alone can do this.

III. That man may “almost” become, still fall short of being, a Christian. “*Almost* thou persuadest me.” How near a man may get to the kingdom of heaven, and still never reach it! He may stand on its very threshold, and after all not get in. A man may have Christian knowledge, Christian desires, and still never experience Christian feelings; like the youth who, kneeling at His feet,

inquired of Christ how he might obtain "eternal life," he may only lack one thing, viz. *supreme love to Christ*. Yet that one thing is the all-essential. It is the vital element of all the rest; and without it all else is but a cold inanimate form.

IV. That for the non-possession of the Christian character man himself will be culpable. He must bear the guilt of neglecting or abusing the facilities afforded him for obtaining it, as well as the loss of the blessings it would have brought him. It would have crowned him with a guerdon better than royalty could bestow; it would have won for him a home in heaven, and a seat at God's right hand: but without it all is lost.

Friend, learn the importance of Christian character; it is infinitely more valuable than gold. Let me point thee to its source, Jesus Christ. And while I remind thee that the angel opportunity will soon vanish for ever from thy presence, let me urge thee with all speed, all sincerity, and all earnestness to lay hold of it; and cry from thy heart, "I will not let thee go" until "thou bless me"!

Eyemouth.

W. JOHNSON.

The Barren Fig Tree.

"A certain man had a fig tree planted," etc.—LUKE xiii. 6-9.

THE complainant and the judge are face to face. The complaint is, "that Pilate had mingled the blood of the Galilæans with their sacrifices;" the judgment is, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." This prediction was fulfilled forty years afterwards in the days of Titus.

"*Had a fig tree planted.*" It does not say who planted it. God will not acknowledge a barren professor to be His workmanship. To be *in* the Church is very different from being *of* the Church. There may be barrenness in the Church.

If we notice the conduct of the proprietor, we shall see :—

I. THAT AS MEN INSPECT THEIR VINEYARDS, SO GOD INSPECTS HIS CHURCH. “And he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.”

1. *The proprietor's visit* : “and he came.” God visits the Church. The Church is God's vineyard. 2. *The proprietor's search* : “and he came and sought.” We cannot hide from God. God searches the thoughts and purposes of the heart. 3. *The proprietor's object* : “and he came and sought fruit.” God requires fruit—fruit in the heart, life, Church. Fruit reveals character. 4. *The proprietor's disappointment* : “and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.” Bad fruit counts as none. Resolutions not performed count as none. To obtain God's approval there must be good fruit. Repentance, faith, prayer, practice.

If we notice the conduct of the proprietor, we shall see :—

II. THAT AS MEN DETEST BARREN TREES, SO GOD DETESTS BARREN PROFESSORS. “Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?”

This verse teaches four things :—

1. *The proprietor's forbearance* : “these three years.” God marks misspent time. 2. *The proprietor's personal inspection* : “this tree.” We cannot shelter in a crowd. 3. *The proprietor's decision* : “cut it down.” God cannot always bear with barrenness. There are two ways in which God cuts down barren professors—(a) by casting them out of the Church; (b) by taking them out of the world. 4. *The proprietor's reason* : they cumber the ground. They prevent God's blessing from resting on the Church. They are a reproach to religion.

If we notice the conduct of the dresser, we shall see :—

III. THAT AS MEN TEST BARREN TREES, SO CHRIST TESTS BARREN PROFESSORS. “Lord, let it alone this year also, till

I shall dig about it, and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well: and if not, after that thou shalt cut it down."

1. *Christ pleads for a limited probation for the barren professor*: "this year." Our eternal destiny may hang upon the decision of this year, yea of this night. Here is a proof of Christ's deep interest in the welfare of man. 2. *Christ's promise to employ special aid in behalf of the barren professor*: "till I dig about it, and dung it." Christ's work is to bring us to repentance and faith. Here is a proof of Christ's earnestness. 3. *Christ anticipates a future improvement in the barren professor*: "if it bear fruit, well." The barren professor, by repentance, may find favour with God. "If it bear fruit, well:" it will be well in life, well in death, well in eternity. 4. *Christ confirms the destruction of the barren professor*: "if not, after that thou shalt cut it down." There is no hope for a sinner after Christ ceases to plead for him. This shows that there may be incurable professors. The merciful Saviour assents to their terrible doom. "Cut it down."

This should lead to a personal and searching examination. This should provoke personal and active service. This should produce personal and manifest fruit.

Stockport.

JOSEPH WOODHOUSE.

The Multitude in Harmony.

Acts iv. 32.

I. A MULTITUDE believing the gospel of Christ.

II. A multitude living in the constant exercise of prayer (Acts i. 14; ii. 1, 42; iv. 24, 31).

III. A multitude filled with the Holy Spirit.

IV. A multitude inspired with mutual love and concern in a time of common danger and need.

V. A multitude in harmony, as the result of all this: "of one heart and of one soul." Many men, many minds, many dispositions, many tempers; but knit together as the heart of one man.

Dawlish.

F. WAGSTAFF.

Rough Notes for Extempore Preaching.

Paul and Silas in Prison.

“At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God.”—
ACTS xvi. 25, 26.

PRISONS are usually associated with what is disgraceful. But it is often an honour to have been in prison, if there for truth and conscience. The prison has furnished more for Christ's right hand than the palace. The foremost in all that is true and good have been in prison—the leaders in science, philosophy, art, religion, literature, philanthropy. A prison is very much as one's own conscience makes it. Paul and Silas had good consciences, therefore could in prison pray and sing praises.

Learn:—I. *Joy and contentment are possible in the hardest lot.* After all the fatigue and excitement and suffering of the past day, their position of constraint with their feet in the stocks, at the midnight hour, they prayed and sang praises unto God. No one inculcates more frequently the duty of rejoicing than the apostle Paul: “Rejoice in the Lord; again I say, rejoice.” “Rejoice evermore.” Paul's practice is consistent with his precept. Many sanguine temperaments rejoice only in the sunshine; but not so Paul. His joy was contingent on no earthly sun. The light of God's truth and God's love was always shining upon everything around him, so that in the darkest hour and in the inner prison he prayed and sang praises to God. The Christian is not the “creature of circumstances.” By faith he rises above all outward circumstances. The prison even may be the “house of God, the very gate of heaven.”

II. *The speediest way out of our difficulties.* Unite songs of praise with prayer: “in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make known your requests unto the Lord.” If Paul and Silas, instead of singing praises, had poured out complaints and tears,

their prayers would not have been followed by the earthquake and speedy release. There would be need of their remaining longer in prison, that the trial might work in them patience. These two men had learned, in whatever state they were, to be content; and for this reason they were delivered. Nothing keeps men down like discontent and fretting.

The Philippian Jailer.

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."—Acts xvi. 30, 31.

THE prayers and songs of praise of Paul and Silas were followed with a loud amen; "suddenly there was a great earthquake," etc. The jailer, awaking out of sleep, saw from his chamber the doors wide open. In his stupor he may have thought the noise that awoke him may have been a rescue by the prisoners' friends. Remembering the special charge he received the previous day to keep them safely, and knowing the severity of the Roman law towards those who allowed their prisoners to escape, in despair he drew out his sword to kill himself. But Paul heard his language of despair, as the prison doors were wide open. Hearing the ring of the sword as it was drawn from the scabbard, and perhaps the entreaties and deprecation of his wife and family, and knowing well the tendency of the Roman to resort to this miserable expedient of escaping out of difficulties, he cried with a loud voice, Do thyself no harm. How strange to the jailer would this seem! that men, with the doors open, and retaining the most perfect presence of mind, should be unwilling to escape; and still more strange that they should be anxious for the safety of one who yesterday so cruelly treated them. It immediately flashed across the jailer that these strange men might be what the "damsel possessed with a spirit of divination" indicated, "servants of the Most High God." The fear of God now replaces the fear of man. He remembers how harshly

he had treated these men. Now in agony he cries, What must I do to be saved? Thou hast saved me from shedding my own blood; can you save me from the wrath of the Most High God, whose servants you are, and whom in my treatment of you I have so grievously offended? To this earnest inquiry they give the direction, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

I. *The object.* Jesus Christ. He alone is the proper object to which an *awakened* sinner should be directed. One *not* awakened should be directed to God and His broken law, that he may be startled to a consciousness of his danger. To one sailing thoughtlessly down a stream, unconscious of the fatal cataract ahead, it would be useless to throw a rope and ask him to lay hold of it and be saved. First startle him into consciousness of danger. To Felix and Drusilla the apostle would have reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. To the publican smiting on his breast, to the prodigal returning with the confession, I have sinned, he would give the direction of our text, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Peace-maker for troubled souls: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in *me*;" "having made peace through the blood of his cross."

II. *Believe on.* Distinguish between "believe" and "believe on," or "in." Latter always means *trust*. The jailer *believed*, believed that he was a sinner, and that the message of the apostle was true; but this had the effect upon him it has upon devils, made him tremble. A person believes a plank across a stream will bear him; but he *trusts* it only when he sets his feet on it, and by it crosses the stream. The assent of the understanding is all that is needed for belief; the consent of the will is essential to trust or belief *in*. The great lack is the want of will, not the want of evidence—the believing with the heart, not so much the belief with the understanding.

III. *The salvation promised.* "Thou shalt be saved, and thy house." His household were around him, and

had evinced like concern. If they put not in words the question, What must we do to be saved? they expressed it in their looks. Turning from the jailer when he had said, "and *thou* shalt be saved," and speaking to the anxious faces of his household, the apostle adds "*and thy house.*" Lydia's conversion, in the same town, led to the conversion of all her household, and the apostle had good reason for believing that it would be so also with that of the jailer. The result justified the statement, "he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

The salvation of a household often follows upon the decision of its head. Most of our converts are children of believers; but we must guard against supposing that piety of the parent secures salvation of the children, exempts them from the necessity of personally believing on Jesus Christ.

Bromley, Kent.

D. L.

The Thorn in the Flesh.

"And lest I should be exalted above measure," etc.—2 Cor. xii. 7-10.

THE result of the vision or revelation of the Lord, mentioned in the preceding verses, was unspeakably elevating to the apostle. So far did it remove him from all that was earthly that he was unable to say whether his spirit was literally carried up into heaven, or whether the vision was disclosed to him "in the body." But he was soon reminded again of the earth. As on the occasion of the first revelation with which St. Paul was favoured, that at Damascus, he was visited with blindness, so here after this more glorious revelation he was tried by a renewal of the old visitation, or by some other affliction which clung to him more or less through life.

What was this thorn in the flesh? A *spiritual* trial might be termed a thorn in the flesh, and in this case Rom. vii. 23, 24 would be an allusion to it. Such a thorn was Luther's. But all the expressions that refer to

St. Paul's thorn seem to point rather to some bodily ailment.

(a) Tradition has long sought to identify this trial with a pain in the head; but such a supposition has no support from Scripture.

(b) The apostle's allusion to it in chap. x. 10 seems to point to some defect in utterance.

(c) The conjecture that has most support from Scripture is that it was some affection of the eyes. Although this "revelation" cannot be identified with that on the way to Damascus, yet nothing more natural than that Paul should retain traces of the loss of sight with which he was then afflicted, and that he should feel it acutely after great excitement or special "visions." His not recognising the high-priest Ananias before the council (Acts xxiii. 4, 5) is best explained by supposing that it was owing to weakness of eyesight; so also his frequent use of an amanuensis. But the apostle's allusion to it in Gal. iv. 13-15 is the most conclusive: in the 13th and 14th verses he commends the Galatians for their reception of him in his trial, and in the 15th verse he bears them record that if it were possible they would have plucked out their own *eyes* and have given them to him. Why the allusion to so unnatural a sacrifice as that of plucking out their eyes, and why add, "*and have given them to me,*" unless to express their anxiety to make up his defect, or alleviate his trial?

The apostle besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from him. From the Lord's reply, learn:—

I. *That the best answer to prayer is not always the receiving of our request:* "my grace is sufficient for thee." So our Lord, Matt. xxvi. 39-44. Trial is good for us, but not trial more than we are able to bear: hence we have *grace sufficient*. A boy at school, if he meets with no difficulty, becomes careless; if with difficulties more and greater than he can overcome by the help within his reach, grows disheartened. And we are all here at school.

II. *The feeling of weakness is strength:* "my strength

is made perfect in weakness ;” “ when I am weak, then am I strong.” Many a one in weak and infirm health does much more than others who are in robust health, *e.g.* Richard Baxter. Many a man with a stammering tongue becomes a more useful and persuasive preacher than one gifted with fluency of speech. But especially near the cross is this truth felt. The cross itself is illustrative of it ; its shame and weakness are the power of God in all who believe. The weakness of the apostles, the want of culture in the twelve, and the bodily weakness of Paul, is the strength of the gospel, showing the excellency of it to be of God. So in modern times—Carey, etc. When the Christian’s weakness leads him to the cross, it proves his strength. Peter’s weakness and fall was his strength in after life. Paul’s thorn was the occasion of the power of Christ resting on him.

III. *The apostle’s lofty view of affliction* : “ most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities,” etc. Rather than seek deliverance from his infirmity, he will glory in it. He will take pleasure in it, because it is the occasion of Christ’s power resting on him, dwelling in him. Many Christians, in faith and feeling, rise no higher in the hour of affliction than the state of submission. “ We must submit ” is the loftiest expression that falls from their lips : they manifest no joy that through their bodily weakness the power of Christ may rest the more upon them.

Bromley, Kent.

D. L.

Reviews.

EXPOSITORY LECTURES ON ST. PAUL’S EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS. By the Rev. F. W. ROBERTSON. New Edition. *Smith, Elder & Co.*

These lectures have been long before the public, and we are glad to see this cheap edition uniform with the “ Sermons.” Mr. Robertson’s style is pre-eminently expository. In this

as he does not aim so much at verbal exposition as to find the meaning of a paragraph or chapter. He instinctively catches the true spirit of the passage, and presents it to his peculiarly interesting and forcible style. Mr. Robertson the Sunday afternoons was in the habit of expounding early through a book of Scripture. This form of address considered gave him greater freedom both in style and content than that of the sermon. The Epistles to the Corinthians were the subject of the last series of such lectures. He concluded this series of lectures with the text 'Finally brethren, farewell' (2 Cor. xiii. 11), and his voice was never so loudly heard from the pulpit of Trinity Chapel." These lectures were selected by him because "they afforded the widest scope for the consideration of a great variety of questions in Christian casuistry which he thought important to be clearly understood." He has succeeded in throwing light upon and giving additional interest to the study of the Epistles to the Corinthians.

COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT. Part I. By JAMES MORISON, D.D. *Hamilton, Adams & Co.*

In this brief specimen we have ample proof of Dr. Morison's ability for the great work he proposes to himself. We have extensive erudition, acute thinking, clear expression, and a just appreciation of Scripture. One defect we regret to find an appearance of special pleading. On some controverted points we feel as if we were reading extracts from sermons rather than the calm, well weighed decisions of the critical scholar. The style of the pulpit is unsuited to the pages of commentary. This defect we regret the more, as for the most part we coincide with his conclusions.

THE NEW AND OLD. By Rev. F. FERGUSON, M.A. *Edinburgh, Adamson.*

This is a volume of sermons, the subjects of which are more taken from the men of yesterday than the worthies of Old or New Testament times, more the startling incidents of to-day than the traditional sayings of old. The discourses are in orthodox form divided into heads, but some of these bear rather a strange appearance. Under the heading of "The Path of Duty," we have, e.g., II. *His entrance upon the full peace of the gospel when he embraced the views of the Evangelical*

Union." Even when Mr. Ferguson takes for his text the passage, "For God so loved the world," etc., instead of unfolding its riches, he devotes the discourse to answering the question, *Why is this verse such a favourite?* This mode of preaching is popular with many, especially the illiterate. Mr. Ferguson perhaps is one of the best models of that peculiar style. But we humbly think that unfolding the words of Scripture is "a more excellent way."

SUMMERS AND WINTERS IN THE ORKNEYS. By DANIEL GORRIE.
Hodder and Stoughton.

Many of our readers, well-nigh worn out with the past year's campaign, are now longing for their autumn holiday, when, free from "the care of the Church," they can climb hills, ramble over fields, or sit lazily by the seaside. If any one should be so far behind as not yet to have made up his mind where his holiday shall be spent, a perusal of "Summers and Winters in the Orkneys" may lead him to decide that it shall be in the Orkney Isles. The novelty of the long summer and autumn days of these northern isles, the charming "tacks" through the archipelago, and the simple life and primitive manners of the islanders form irresistible attractions to all who are weary of the cold manners and stiff formality of town life. If any pastor should deem it an additional attraction to have unlimited opportunities of speaking, some of the Orkney Isles furnish ample scope for the most voluble preacher. Of one of these islands, Fair Isle, visited by our author in one of his "tacks," he thus writes—

"To do the islanders justice, it must be admitted that they are no bigots, since they give a rapturous welcome to anything in the shape of a clergyman, and follow in crowds the itinerant Baptist preacher. Strangers, in fact, who intend visiting the island, would do well to provide themselves with a volume of manuscript sermons, as an invitation to conduct religious service in the school-house is almost irresistible. The arrival of a bona fide minister is considered a perfect windfall, and the poor people have recourse to all sorts of devices to retard his departure."

Those however who find it impossible this year to go so far from home will find "Summers and Winters in the Orkneys" a very interesting book, full of information, well arranged and beautifully written.

Foreign Pulpit.

THE TRUE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BY THE LATE PASTOR VERNY.*

(TRANSLATED BY REV. R. S. ASHTON, B.A.)

“When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, ” etc.—MATT. xvi. 13–19.

THE words addressed by our Lord to Simon Peter on occasion referred to in the text occupy an important place in the discussions which unhappily divide the various sections of the visible Church. On this passage

the Church of Rome founds the primacy which it claims on behalf of its spiritual head. By saying to Simon Peter that he should be the rock on which the Church should be built, the Lord is said to have conferred on him, as distinct from the rest of the apostles and from the faithful, an incontestable authority, which has been transmitted from him to the bishops of Rome, his successors, who as such have continued to exercise it down to our time, and will do so, it is said, until the end of the world.

I am not about to re-open, after so many others, the examination and refutation of this claim; I do not wish

* Pastor Verny was a most highly esteemed minister of the Lutheran Church in Paris. He died on the 19th of October, 1854, while in the act of preaching in the church of St. Thomas at Strasburg the opening sermon of the Session of the Superior Consistory of the Lutheran Church in France. The following discourse is translated from a volume of Verny's sermons, published in the course of last year.

to speak controversially. The task would certainly be an easy one. It would be sufficient to inquire whether our Lord's words—the words which our opponents never weary of uttering with such confidence, really contain all that they are supposed to contain. Did our Lord, by speaking in these terms to Peter, really intend to clothe him with a superiority over the other disciples? True, Peter was permitted to hold a prominent and in some sort a privileged position in relation to our Lord; but did his position ever give him the authority over his fellow-apostles which the papacy claims for itself over the Church at the present day? If such an authority had ever belonged to him, does it follow that it would have passed to his successors? In short, has he had any successors? and if so, who have they been? Are they the bishops of Rome? Was he himself bishop of Rome? Was he ever in Rome? These are questions, some of which have been settled in a way most clearly subversive of the pretensions of Rome; while others, as for instance Peter's presence in Rome and the influence he exercised there, constitute historical problems which must for ever remain without solution. It suffices just to state them, to show that this papal institution, founded, so we are told, on the Rock of Ages, rests in fact on nothing better than mere hypotheses.

But, again, we do not desire to draw you into a controversy which would conduce but little to your edification. Let us trouble ourselves no longer, or at least let us try to trouble ourselves as little as possible, with the arbitrary interpretation which the Romish Church gives to these words of our Lord. Let us consider them very simply, inquiring what lessons, warnings, encourage-

ments, and consolations they contain for us. Now one thing is certain : they were uttered in reference to Peter's faith ; they are very closely related to the faith of which Peter in the name of his brethren had just made so noble a confession. The Lord had asked His disciples, " Whom do ye say that I am ? " And Simon Peter, taking up the question, had answered, " Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then the Saviour said, " Blessed art thou, Simon," and the words that follow. Underlying these words therefore we find a precious truth, the reality of which no one surely can dispute, namely that the Church of which the Saviour here speaks, *the true Christian Church*, is a Church of faith, that it is *built on faith*, that it *acts by faith*, and that it *triumphs by faith*. We desire to consider each of these points successively, and we pray that the Lord may help us by His Spirit of light and truth.

I. Let us first of all dwell on Peter's *profession of faith*, which the Saviour accompanies with so glorious a promise. It is not a learned, complicated, or even detailed exposition. True, in these few words the whole Christian doctrine, the whole gospel is expressed ; Peter, his companions in labour, and the great apostle of the Gentiles himself, will at a later period teach nothing not comprised in these four words. But at the moment when we hear them fall from his lips Peter does not consider, he has no clear idea of, all that they contain ; his faith is summed up in one very simple and very elementary notion ; in his Master, the humble rabbi of Nazareth, he has recognised the Anointed of the Lord, promised by the prophets as He who should establish the kingdom of God upon earth ; and to the question asked by Jesus, " Whom do you say

that I am ? ” he replies by this brief confession, “ Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Though simply expressed, this faith of Peter’s is nevertheless full of depth and substance. Remember how he confesses it on another occasion. Several disciples having withdrawn from Jesus, He asked the twelve, “ And you, will ye also go away ? ” “ To whom shall we go, Lord ? ” exclaimed Peter, “ Thou hast the words of eternal life. We have believed and do know that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Mark these words, “ To whom shall we go ? We have believed and do know.” It is not a simple act of the understanding, it is not a mere head knowledge which Peter expresses ; no, it is through the deepest wants of his moral nature, through his conscience and his heart, which, destitute of life, seek for words of life and of life eternal, and with his very inmost soul, that he has recognised Jesus Christ : he has felt that His words are precisely those words of life for which he thirsted ; he has perceived in Jesus the Divine nature, the moral perfections of God, the wisdom, holiness, and love of God, that fellowship by which alone his own nature can be healed, saved, and regenerated ; thus, though still ignorant, yet from the very bottom of his heart, and full of emotion, feeling, and conviction, he exclaims, “ Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Such is the faith, the possession of which, as we learn from the Saviour’s reply, was so rich a source of happiness for Peter, “ Blessed art thou, Simon son of Jonas.” It is not a product of human nature, temperament, imagination, understanding, and reflection ; it is God’s gift ; the Spirit of God sheds it abroad in the heart, and by it

regenerates and sanctifies. "Flesh and blood have not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." By this faith the disciple will grow and become strong and immovable; by it he will justify his name, and will become, not the only and exclusive stone, but one of the stones on which the Lord will build His Church.

What is the Church of which the Saviour speaks—the Christian Church? Is it an external institution? Is it based on material conditions? Is it recruited and governed by material means? Does it live like legal societies on legal fictions? The olden economy was an institution, a fiction of this kind. It was entered by natural birth and by circumcision; whoever was of the race of Abraham, whoever had received the sacramental sign, whether he were a believer or an unbeliever, subject to or rebellious against the commandments of the Lord, he was and he continued to be a member of the kingdom of God. Priests also sprung from the same stock, the stock of Levi, served therein by virtue of their birth and independently of all spiritual qualifications, as the regular intercessors, as the legal and indispensable mediators between the people and the Lord; at the head of this caste, at the summit of this edifice, stood a high-priest, who in his inmost soul, in his secret life, might be vicious, idolatrous, or impious, but by virtue of his office he nevertheless enjoyed the exclusive privilege of approaching God, of entering alone into the holy of holies, of receiving God's answer, and of making reconciliation for himself and for the people. Is the Christian Church anything like this? No! The olden economy, Scripture tells us, was a figure; it was only a shadow of things to come; the body, the substance, of those things is in

Jesus Christ; the olden economy was a fiction; the new one is the reality: reality alone will do there. And what reality? Jesus Christ! faith in Jesus Christ! The Christian Church is defined by faith; those only have a place and portion in the Church who are possessed of faith, simple faith perhaps, an ignorant and but poorly developed faith, but a faith of the conscience and the heart, a faith of the soul athirst for truth and salvation, and which says to Jesus Christ, "To whom shall I go, Lord? Thou only hast the words of eternal life; I have believed and do know that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Between all the souls that can truly repeat these words this faith forms an invisible and spiritual, but also a living, bond; and this chain, this association, this communion of enlightened souls, renewed and sanctified by faith,—that, and that only, is the Christian Church. Read over all the passages in the New Testament in which the Lord and His apostles speak of the Church, and say if their expressions are applicable to any other Church than that which we have just defined; it is only the society of souls renewed by faith in Jesus Christ that can be called the spouse of Christ, the body of which Christ is the head, the spiritual house of God, the people of God, the chosen race, the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem; it is this Church, and this alone, which St. Paul designates as an edifice built on the foundation, not alone of St. Peter, but of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, resting on which the whole edifice, bound together in all its parts, riseth to be a holy temple unto the Lord; it is of it, and of it alone, that St. Peter himself speaks,

When he says to all Christians without exception, "You, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." You see then that the foundation of the Church is faith, that the condition of membership is faith, and that the living bond which unites the members is faith. True, when the Church seeks to manifest itself externally, unconverted sinners, infidels, hypocrites may possibly become connected with it. It cannot prevent this; it has not the power to search the heart; the Lord alone knows His own people. But these sinners, these infidels, these hypocrites, who, having been baptized in the waters of an external baptism, confess Christ with their lips, are found in the assemblies of the faithful, and partake of the sacrament of His body and blood, are not really members of the Church of Christ; much less can they be called its foundation, whatever their external position may happen to be! The proudest theologian, the most eloquent orator, the most zealous pastor, the ecclesiastical functionary of highest position, if he has not faith, if by faith he has not been born again to a new life, is not a member of the body of Christ, does not form part of the Church; how then can he be its foundation? Let all the votes of the Sacred College be given for one priest; place him in the apostolical chair, and put on his head the triple crown; if he is a heretic, as Liberius, Vigilius, and Honorius were; if he is carried away by human ambition and passion like Gregory VII. or Alexander VII., like Innocent XI. or Clement XI.; if he is addicted to infamous and monstrous practices; if, in one word, your pope is an Innocent VI., a Sixtus IV., an Alexander Borgia, or a John XXIII.,—

will you dare to admit for a single moment that such men were the foundations of the Church of Jesus Christ, and that to them could be applied in any sense whatever the holy words of the Lord, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church"? Far rather they have shaken it; and if it had been destructible, they would have destroyed it. But let a simple soul, in the humblest, poorest, and most obscure condition, without study, without eloquence, and without external titles,—let such a soul receive the faith of Christ, and be sanctified by it; let it show by love that this faith is a power, and let it shed around by word and deed the sweet savour of Jesus Christ: such a soul has, according to the measure of its fellowship with Christ, received into itself the true foundation of the Church, the only one that can be laid; it becomes itself part of this foundation, and in this sense has its portion in the word and promise of the Master. Yes; if any soul, either in these pews or in these galleries, can with Peter's conviction and emotion exclaim, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and with his truthfulness say to the Lord, "Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee," and with his courage declare to the world, "We must obey God rather than man," and with his confidence say to the man sick of the palsy, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee; in the name of Jesus Christ, arise and walk!"—if there is amongst us but one soul possessed of Peter's faith, it will hold equal rank in the Church as Peter, and to it our Lord's words will apply, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

II. Again, *the Church exercises its power through faith.* The power of the Church, as regards its essential features, is expressed in those other words of the Lord to Peter: "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Let us first try to interpret this language. It is borrowed from an eastern custom. The locks of doors in the east are composed of a sort of latch which is moved by the help of a cord or of more or less complicated bands, which are untied or undone by means of a sort of key; so that to *bind* in this passage signifies nothing more than to shut the door, and *loose* to open it. This power of closing the gate of heaven, or of opening it, this power of the keys, which the Lord here confers on Peter, is, as all are agreed, the power of retaining or remitting sins.

Now did the Lord confer on Peter exclusively this power of retaining or remitting sins? No! for on another occasion He said to all the apostles, "Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John xx. 23). Or did He confer this power on the apostles alone, and in such a way that it may be considered as the privilege of some new sacerdotal order, and which the apostles were the first to enjoy? Certainly not; for on this occasion the apostles were not alone, all the disciples according to St. Luke's testimony were with them. To the whole company the Lord addressed these words,—to all His disciples He said, "Peace be with you; as my Father has sent me, even so send I you." He breathed on all His disciples, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." To all

His disciples He gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and said, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

The fact is that the Lord did not connect the exercise of this great and mysterious power with one condition, one election, one consecration, one external and human position. He connected it with the quality of *disciple of the Son of God*. Now what, according to Scripture, is a disciple of Jesus Christ? Listen to Jesus Christ Himself: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;" "Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples;" "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." What constitutes the disciple is therefore perseverance in the word of Jesus Christ, the fruits of holiness, the virtue of self-denial and sacrifice, in one word, living faith, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit. With this faith, this consecration by the Holy Spirit, with this unction from the Holy One, with this true Christian priesthood, alone, is connected the power of the keys, the power of binding and loosing, of retaining or remitting sins.

Yes, when a faithful voice proclaims to you the design of God in regard to your salvation, preaches to you repentance and remission of sins, turns your attention to the transgressions, to the omissions of duty, to the disorders of your life, and to that estrangement from God which is at the bottom of your heart; when this voice proclaims to the penitent and convicted sinner that his sins will not be remembered against him in virtue of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, to the hardened and impenitent

sinner that the wrath of God shall rest upon him, this voice, even though it come from the humblest and most uncultured person, and one destitute of all human authority, has all the authority of the voice of God, of God Himself. Yes, at that moment a sentence, a Divine sentence, is uttered respecting you; your sins, if you abhor them and ask pardon for them in the name of Jesus Christ, are forgiven; your sins, if you love them and excuse them to the extent of clinging to them, are retained; at that moment is fulfilled, in regard to the disciple who speaks to you, the declaration of the supreme Judge, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind," etc.

Nor is this all: we know nothing, it is true, of confession in the sense in which it is understood and practised by another Church; we have not made it into a formality of periodical obligation, a sort of disciplinary mechanism; but do not think that confession in itself is unknown amongst us, that we do not understand its importance, and that we misapprehend the need to which the apostolic exhortation corresponds—"Confess your faults one to another." It is, we think, a want to be satisfied, but not a form to be gone through; it is a precept which we must obey, according to the liberty of the gospel and not under the yoke of the law; and in order to obey it we refer you not to the consecration with oil, but to the anointing of the Holy Spirit, not to the official priesthood but to the priesthood of the election of God, not to the robe but to faith. Yes, amidst the uncertainty and anguish of your conscience, go to a disciple of Jesus Christ, to a Christian in whom you feel and see faith and life; open your heart to him, confide your doubts and struggles to him, confess your sins and faults to him; and

whether he should find you cherishing your evil desires and wicked purposes, and destitute of the courage to attack your own flesh and your own will, as also of sincerity towards yourself and towards God, and should sound forth in your ear the threatenings of Divine justice,—or whether, seeing you penitent, humble, and desirous of pardon and regeneration, he should tell you of the mercy and love of your Saviour,—be sure that the sins which he retains are retained, and that the sins which he pardons are pardoned.

Nay, more : perhaps you have not taken the initiative, you have not opened your heart to your brother, and you have not authorized his free dealing with you by a similar course towards him ; but among those who surround you in your house there is found a true disciple of Jesus Christ, humble and inferior according to the world's way of thinking, a Christian domestic, a pious servant, who seeing you live in sin has warned you, and said, "My master, my brother, take care, you are walking in a bad way and one that leads to death ; if you continue in it the Divine chastisement now suspended over your head will at length descend upon you ;" or seeing you sad or cast down, this brother, this sister has raised you up and comforted you by saying, "You are suffering ; but be of good courage, God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear ; if your heart condemns you God is greater than your heart ; God has so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life ; believe in Him, and you will be saved ; go in peace through Him, and in Him your sins are forgiven you." Well, know this,

that man-servant or maid-servant, that humble Christian, if he or she spoke in faith, was really at that moment as far as you are concerned the successor of St. Peter; he or she appeared clothed with the priesthood of the new covenant and with the ministry of the Spirit of life; he or she, while speaking to you, exercised the power conferred by our Lord upon His disciples, "I will give thee the keys," etc.

III. *By faith the Church triumphs over its enemies.*
"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

What now is this hell whose gates, whose power shall not prevail against the Church? It is the enemies against which it has to contend: its external enemies, the world which hates the gospel because it puts a restraint on the lust of the flesh, on the lust of the eyes, and on the pride of life; the world which seeks by mockery, seduction, and if need be by violence, to stop the action of the Church, to destroy the Church itself. Also its internal enemies,—doubt, infidelity, lukewarmness, the interests and passions of the world, change of doctrine, and laxity of morals, everything that disturbs it, everything that enervates it, everything that materializes it, everything that tends to hinder it from being truly the body of Christ and the spiritual house of God. These enemies the Lord declares and promises shall not prevail against the Church. But how shall it resist them? How shall its efforts prove finally victorious? In presence of the assaults of the world, shall it repel mockery by mockery? shall it seek to regain by seductive means what it has lost by the same? shall it oppose violence to violence? Conscious of the evils which ever and anon manifest and propagate themselves in its midst, shall it

have recourse to the weapons by which civil societies defend themselves against internal troubles? shall it frame for itself a strong organization? shall it establish a stern discipline? shall it create a vigilant and inflexible authority? Alas! the Church might employ all these means; it might make the most prudent and at the same time the most energetic use of them; it might thus succeed in repelling the aggressions of the world, and in securing for itself the most perfect liberty of action, an independent and glorious existence; while it might also establish in its midst the most correct teaching and the most unexceptionable order: do you think that in this way it would overcome its enemies and realize the Saviour's promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it? Alas! in the moment of its triumph and when it might think that it was at length victorious, at that very moment hell might have succeeded in drawing it into the most dangerous of all its snares, then hell might indeed be said to have prevailed against it; for it would have called down upon itself the Divine curse, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and that maketh flesh his arm."

Nay further, this is not a mere hypothesis; these victories of the Church, we have seen them. History shows us in the past a Church firmly organized, mighty, proud, having in a certain sense so thoroughly subdued the world, that its head, who applies to himself exclusively the promise of Christ to Peter, placed his foot on the head of the kings of the earth; it shows us in the midst of Protestantism Churches of perfect orthodoxy and discipline, able to preserve amongst their members purity of profession and conduct: and yet it exhibits

ese Churches to us—those of the middle ages and those of modern times—as being thoroughly under the influence of the spirit of the world. If, in the scriptural sense of the word, the world is hell, then in the very midst of their apparent triumph and prosperity the gates of hell had prevailed against them.

Oh ! how much we need to understand, and to repeat ourselves incessantly, that the destinies, the victories, and the prosperity of the Church of Christ must be appreciated in a very different manner from those of human societies. What is a victory for the world is a defeat for the Church ; and on the other hand, what is a defeat for the world is a victory for the Church. This is certainly hard and difficult for the flesh, it is in direct opposition to the ideas and prejudices of our times ; but it is nevertheless necessary to repeat it once and again ; the life, the power, the glory, the all of the Christian Church, as of every private Christian, is *faith*.

It is not to a man, a function, an institution, a seat raised in such or such a city—it is to Peter's faith, which is also that of every disciple of Jesus Christ, it is to faith in Christ, the Son of the living God, that the Lord's promise is given. Let there be this kind of faith, and the Church's victory is certain. The promise has been fulfilled ; the gates of hell, in spite of so many efforts, have not prevailed against the Church. Why ? Is it because it has had a visible head in Rome ? By no means ; but because in the ranks of the poor, the humble, and the enslaved, simple believers, who perhaps did not even know of the existence of a bishop of Rome, believed and knew that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and through the power of that faith were

even willing to lose their lives for His sake. Hell has more than once prevailed at the Vatican, in the palaces of prelates, and in the seclusion of monasteries; hell has more than once filled with a bitter zeal and a diabolical wisdom the heart and mouth of members of councils; but in some obscure cell, in some village manse, in some Beguin convent in the Low Countries, in some valley of Piedmont, lived simple persons, who sought their salvation simply through Christ. There was the Church; and there, after having triumphed in every other direction, hell came with all its force, and was defeated. This course of victory will continue until the last day, the fixing of which the Father has kept in His own power; it will continue as long as faith in the Son of God continues in the world. Yes, if there were but "two or three" souls that believed in Jesus Christ, they would be the Church, and to it would still be fully applicable the promise of the Lord, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Be well assured then that our Lord's words, in the text before us, say nothing, establish nothing, promise nothing, exceptional or special, to any particular man, place, or external position. They are applicable to Peter's faith, and consequently to you, if (and in the measure in which) Peter's faith is yours. Yes, believe like Peter, and you also will have in yourselves, you will be, the stone on which Jesus builds His Church: believe like Peter, and you also will possess the keys of the kingdom of heaven; what you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; what you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven: believe like Peter, and the gates of hell will not prevail against your faith, nor against the

Church of which this faith is the foundation, the bond, and the life. Are you in danger of being tempted to pride by applying these words to yourself? Then remember that on the very day when they make you proud they cease to apply to you. You are not members of the Church of Christ, you do not enter into the kingdom of heaven, much less can you be its foundation, you cannot act for it and conquer in its name, unless you become like children; the greatest among you is he who shall feel himself to be the least, and shall make himself the servant of his brethren. And besides does not your faith remind you of this? If the Church rests on you, you yourselves rest on the only foundation which can be laid, on the Rock of Ages, on Jesus Christ. If you bind and unloose the consciences that listen to you, Jesus alone searches the hearts and the reins, is the sovereign Judge, has power to pardon sins, and holds the keys of heaven and hell. If the Church triumphs through your instrumentality, it is not through you, but through Him whose strength is made perfect in your weakness. He is everything; we must go to Him, we must be united with Him: without Him, without faith in Him, you have nothing, you are nothing; but by faith in Him all things are yours. May He give Himself therefore to you, and be your portion for ever! Amen.

The Gospel according to Mark

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. J. H. GODWIN.

BOOK II.

Last Journey, and Ministry in Jerusalem.

PART I.

Last Journey. Lessons of Self-denial.

DIV. I. *On Family Relations.* (X. 1-16.)

EC. I. ¹ AND arising thence, He went unto the borders of
rney in Judæa, through the country beyond the Jordan. And
æa.

BOOK II. As in the previous narrative there are three parts, the first being introductory to the two which describe the ministry in Galilee; so in the remainder there are three parts, the first being preparatory to the two which relate the last ministry in Jerusalem, and the death of Jesus. St. Mark and St. Matthew agree in the account given of the close of the ministry in Galilee, and also in passing at once to the last journey through the country on the east of the Jordan. St. Luke's narrative of the close of the ministry in Galilee is similar to theirs; but it is followed immediately by statements respecting a journey to Jerusalem, through Samaria (ix. 53). Then subsequently, after many events and discourses, the last journey to Jerusalem is related, beginning xvii. 11, and at xviii. 15 coinciding again with the narratives of St. Mark and St. Matthew. St. John also gives what is intermediate, noticing three journeys before the last. He mentions, first, a journey from Galilee to Jerusalem at the feast of tabernacles, in the autumn (vii. 2); secondly, another visit at the feast of dedication, in the winter (x. 22); and thirdly, a journey from Peræa to Bethany (xi. 17). After these is the journey which began at Ephraim (xi. 54) and ended at Jerusalem (xii. 1). The narrative of St. Luke, from x. 1 to xvii. 10, and that of St. John, in chaps. vii. to xi., occupy the interval between chaps. ix. and x. of St. Mark, and chaps. xviii. and xix. of St. Matthew. That the journey related by them followed directly the end of the ministry in Galilee, is merely an inference founded on their silence. But they both pass in like

again multitudes came together unto Him ; and as He was wont He again taught them.

manner, from the temptation in Judæa, to the baptism and ministry in Galilee, saying nothing of the intervening months. As a period unnoticed by them preceded the ministry in Galilee, so a similar period, also unnoticed by them, followed its close. The twelve apostles were with Jesus during the periods to which their narratives refer, and were witnesses of the public ministry which it was their chief purpose to record. St. John was with Jesus when the other apostles were not, and his testimony is therefore to a great extent peculiar, and supplementary to theirs. St. Luke obtained additional information from disciples, who saw and heard what took place in the absence of the twelve.

PART I. (Chap. x.) The first part of the Second Book corresponds to the first part of the First Book. Three subjects are here referred to—family relations, outward riches, and worldly honour ; and similar lessons of self-denial and love are presented with each. These lessons are given in the history, which, beginning with the country beyond Jordan, conducts to the city of Jericho, in the borders of Judæa. The actions and words of Jesus exhibit the character which disciples have to copy, receiving His Spirit that they may follow in His steps.

Div. I. (Chap. x. 1–16.) In this division there is a brief general statement of the renewal of the public ministry of Jesus, as He passed through another district, journeying to Jerusalem. Then the two incidents are related, which give the law of love, and lessons of self-denial, in connection with family relations.

Sec. I. (Mark x. 1 ; Matt. xix. 1, 2.)

¹ The reference is not to the house or town last mentioned, but to Galilee, and to the whole preceding narrative ; and especially to the statements respecting the journey to Jerusalem (viii. 31 ; ix. 31). “He arose and went” is the simple style of narrative, common in the Old Testament and in the New (Mark vii. 24 ; Luke i. 39 ; xv. 18, 20). St. Matthew mentions the cure of sick persons in this district. A previous sojourn in Peræa is noticed by St. John (x. 40), and is shown by St. Luke, this district being subject to Herod (xiii. 32). Similar general statements of the ministry of Jesus have been given before (i. 39 ; iii. 7).

Safety is not always to be sought by withdrawing from danger.

The conduct of Jesus was the same in all places.

SEC. II.
Question
Divorce.

¹ And Pharisees coming forward questioned Him, to prove Him, Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?

² But He in reply said to them, What did Moses command you? ³ Then they said, Moses permitted to write a deed of separation, and to divorce. ⁴ And Jesus in reply said to them, Because of your hardheartedness he wrote for you this direction. ⁵ But from the beginning of the creation, God made them a male and a female.

SEC. II. (Mark. i. 2-12; Matt. xix. 8-12.) After the general account of the renewal of the ministry of Jesus, the first incident mentioned is the renewal of the opposition of the Pharisees. They proposed a question respecting divorce, with the purpose of proving Him, and, it may be, of leading to some censure of the law of Moses, and of the conduct of Herod. This conversation is not related by St. Luke, he having given the decision of Jesus on this subject in the report of another discourse with the Pharisees a short time before (xvi. 18).

¹ The question as related by St. Matthew is the same, but more fully expressed; there being the addition "for every cause." That divorce was lawful for *some* causes was admitted by all, and had been declared by our Lord. The shorter form of inquiry would be understood to refer to the divorces which were common, but which were a matter of controversy. The admitted case is not referred to by St. Mark, either in the question or the answer; but in both it is noticed by St. Matthew. To the question the school of Schammai said, No, that of Hillel, Yes.

² The question addressed to the Pharisees, respecting the law of Moses, preceded that which they also proposed respecting the reason of that law. The one is related by St. Mark, and the other by St. Matthew, who gives the references to the O. T. in the order of the books, placing that to Genesis before that to Deuteronomy; giving, first the primary Divine appointment, and then the later legislative rule. There is a similar transposition in Matt. xv. 4, 7.

³ The law is in Dent. xxiv. 1. It permitted divorce *indefinitely*; prescribing a form of proceeding which would lessen the practice.

⁴ This statement would naturally follow the inquiry of the Pharisees, as related by St. Matthew, xix. 7. The legal prohibition of arbitrary divorce, in the state of society which then existed, would have prevented some injustice, but have produced much more.

⁵ The reference is to the record of the creation (Gen. i. 27).

⁷ “On this account a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined unto his wife; and the two shall become one nature.” ⁸ So that no longer are they two, but one nature. ⁹ Therefore what God bound together, let not man sever.

¹⁰ And in the house His disciples again questioned Him respecting the same. ¹¹ And He said to them, Whoever shall divorce his wife, and marry another, commits

⁷ These words are from Gen. ii. 24. They are given there, not as the prediction of Adam, but as the comment of the writer, interpreting the narrative, and declaring the will of God as thus indicated. In the report of St. Matthew the statement is attributed to the Creator.

⁸ The word translated *flesh* often represents the whole of human nature, and *all flesh* is a Hebraism for all mankind (Matt. xxiv. 22; Luke iii. 6; John i. 14, iii. 6; Acts ii. 17; Rom. iii. 20; 1 Cor. i. 29).

⁹ The law of Moses was of Divine authority; but it was only for a people in a low social condition, and it set forth what was to be enforced by human magistrates. The first facts recorded in sacred history showed the constitution of man, and indicated the Divine will for all men,—this being in the highest sense natural and best for all. The union of marriage corresponds to the primary union in the person of Adam, as there described. There is a living unity, the husband and wife being the one parentage, and, in some respects, one person (Rom. vii. 1).

¹⁰ Without mentioning the house, St. Matthew notices the subsequent conversation with the disciples. He gives their opinion respecting the expediency of marriage, which Jesus admitted, but only partially. What they said was not true for all; nor for any on the ground assigned.

¹¹ The exception to this rule is explicitly given by St. Matthew, in his report of this discourse, and of the sermon on the mount (v. 32, xix. 9). When not expressed, it would be universally understood. Death releases from the obligations of marriage, and so does adultery. In such cases there can be no *injustice* in a second marriage; but where there is nothing for jurisprudence to condemn, there may be the absence of that love which Christian morality commends. The divorce of wives by their husbands was very common among the Jews; and that of husbands by their wives was practised, though not according to law. The permanence of marriage is evidently requisite to the welfare of women and children; and it is equally requisite for the purity and dignity of human affection. Constancy is ever

adultery against her. ¹² And if a woman shall divorce her husband, and be married to another, she commits adultery.

ec. III. ¹³ And they brought to Him little children, that He should touch them ; but the disciples rebuked those who

the purpose and promise of true love ; and the dictates of instinct are confirmed by the largest experience. As society advances, there is always the more general and certain acknowledgment of the great and manifold evils connected with polygamy and divorce.

Nature and Scripture show that marriage should be indissoluble.

Laws may permit a less evil to prevent a greater.

What is therefore allowed is not to be approved or practised.

SEC. III. (Mark x. 13-16 ; Matt. xix. 13-15 ; Luke xviii. 15-17.) In this section the narrative of St. Luke is again parallel to the others, the events and discourses given after the commencement of the final journey being, some in the borders of Samaria and Galilee, and some the other side the Jordan. This incident is closely connected with the preceding, and seems to have taken place in the house, to which Jesus went with the disciples, and from which He afterwards came out to the road (ver. 10, 17). Some persons brought their little children unto Jesus, to receive His blessing. Their conduct was censured by the apostles, who deemed the children unfit for this service, or unworthy of this favour ; but it was commended by the Saviour. He reproved those who would restrain them ; and declared that children were with men in their religious possessions, and that men must be with children in their moral dispositions. He then repeated the lesson of love before given, taking the children to His arms and blessing them.

¹³ St. Luke describes the children as *infants* ; and St. Matthew says they were brought that Jesus might put His hands on them and pray. There is no reason for supposing that a superstitious importance was attributed to the imposition of hands. It was a customary action in sacrifice, and in prayer, to indicate personal connection. There was thus a visible sign of this relation, and not a material means for communicating spiritual blessings (Lev. i. 4 ; Gen. xlviii. 14 ; Acts vi. 6).

brought them. ¹⁴ Then Jesus, seeing it, was much displeased, and said to them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me : forbid them not, for to such the kingdom of God belongs. ¹⁵ Assuredly I declare to you, whoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, cannot enter into it. ¹⁶ And taking them to His arms, putting His hands upon them, He blessed them.

¹⁴ The displeasure and the rebuke which their conduct occasioned show that it resulted from worldliness and want of love (iii. 5, x. 41). The same wrong dispositions appeared in the desire for the liberty of divorce, and in the low regard of children. The form of expression, with the article, makes it certain, that the children who were brought are included in the statement, and that it does not refer only to child-like men (ix. 37 ; Acts xix. 25, xxii. 22).

¹⁵ This declaration is also given by St. Luke, but not here by St. Matthew, he alone having before given a similar statement on another occasion (Matt. xviii. 4).

¹⁶ The taking the children to His arms is similar to the action previously recorded (ix. 56). Jesus did not baptize these children, nor did He ever baptize adults with water. But He declared little children to be the subjects of His kingdom ; and by actions, as significant as any ceremonies, He taught that they should be recognised as belonging to Him. An outward *circumcision* was the rite of *initiation* for Judaism, and an outward *baptism* was the rite of initiation for the kingdom of Christ. It is made unsuitable for children, by ascribing to it a meaning and use which have no Scripture authority. What is called *believers' baptism* is supported by one passage in the common version, but that is an interpolation (Acts viii. 37). The administration of baptism by the apostles is noticed by only one of the evangelists, and that only once and incidentally ; so little importance belonged to the rite in the ministry of Christ (John iv. 1). The supposition that subsequently it became of more moment rests on the mere assumption, that the *baptism* which characterized true Christians was baptism with water. But it might as well be supposed, that the *circumcision* which distinguished the true Jew was the outward rite (Rom. ii. 28).

Little children share in the blessings of the kingdom of Heaven.

DIV. II. *Outward Riches.* (X. 17-31.)

SEC. I.
Inquiry of
a man.

¹⁷ And when He went out into the road, one running forward and kneeling to Him questioned Him,—Good Teacher, what shall I do, that I may obtain eternal life?

¹⁸ Then Jesus said to him, Why dost thou call Me

Prayers and ceremonies for them are reasonable and right.

Christ called them to His arms, to receive His benediction.

The humility and trustfulness of children are proper and needful for men.

DIV. II. (Chap. x. 17-31.) After the lessons on love and self denial in connection with family relations, similar lessons are presented in another connection; the pursuit and use of riches being now referred to. The inquiry of a youth was the occasion of a conversation with him; and this led to statements addressed to the apostles, first on the disadvantages of earthly riches, and then on the rewards of the kingdom of heaven.

SEC. I. (Mark x. 17-22; Matt. xix. 16-22; Luke xvi. 18-23.) When they were again on the road, a young man of rank, who was very rich, came in haste, and kneeling down to Jesus, inquired how he might gain eternal life. He may have recently received his inheritance, losing by death his father's guidance, and learning the uncertainty of earthly possessions. He desired an everlasting inheritance, and asked guidance for his conduct, but sought no other help. Jesus first corrected his false view of human goodness, and then directed him to keep the commandments. When he asked for some higher rule, he was invited to follow Jesus as the apostles did, giving his riches to the poor, and taking his place with those who might have to suffer death in the service of God. For this sacrifice he was not then prepared, and he went away in sorrow, having found, through the teaching of Jesus, a deficiency in himself which no expenditure of money could supply.

¹⁷ St. Luke says that he was a ruler; and St. Matthew that he was a young man, and that he asked what good thing he should do.

¹⁸ The reply of Jesus is given in like manner by St. Luke and by St. Matthew. In some MSS. of the latter it is changed into "Why dost thou question Me respecting the good?"—an alteration apparently made to remove a supposed doctrinal difficulty. The question of Jesus does not seem

good? None is good, except One—God. ¹⁹ Thou knowest the commandments,—Do not commit adultery,—Do not kill,—Do not steal,—Do not bear false witness,—Defraud not,—Honour thy father and mother.

designed to reprove a formal and complimentary salutation; for the inquiry is described as made with earnestness and reverence. Nor does it appear to have been the purpose of our Lord to impart any peculiar revelation of Himself; for nothing follows in accordance with this supposition. The accompanying statement is simply corrective of the false view of human goodness which the inquirer evidently held. He thought that goodness was a human work, to be offered by men to God; in return for which they would receive eternal life. This kind of goodness, which he hoped himself to attain, he attributed to Jesus. In opposition to this false view the truth was declared, that God only is independently good, Good of Himself, the Source and Giver of all good. His commands are not *work*, by which *wages* may be earned, but the *way* in which all good is to be received as a *favour*. Eternal life is not a payment due for service done, but a gift bestowed on all who have faith in God. It would be contrary to all that our Lord said, and to the whole tenour of the New Testament, to suppose that He was not *perfectly* good. He could not disavow this. But it is according to many of His sayings, and to that lowliness of mind in which He is an example to us, that He should not wish to be regarded as *independently* good. According to the gospels, Jesus never took the title of God; nor had the apostles ever thus spoken of Him. This alternative therefore could not be inferred by the person addressed. Nor is there any reason for supposing that a lesson, not given to the apostles, would be thus suggested to one, who came to Him for the first time, and sought some practical instruction. No special difficulty would have been found in these words, if it had been duly considered that, speaking as the Son of man, Jesus always disavowed *independence*; declaring that His wisdom, power, and goodness were from God. His prayers and praise, obedience and faith, manifested the same truth. He said, “The Son can do nothing of himself” (John v. 19); “I have come in the name of my Father” (v. 43); “My doctrine is not mine” (vii. 16); “I do nothing of myself, but I speak these things as the Father taught me. And He who sent me is with me; He has not left me alone, because I always do what is pleasing to Him” (viii. 28). The same union of dependence and perfection was declared by the voice from heaven: “Thou art my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased” (Mark i. 11).

¹⁹ St. Matthew, before the commands, gives the words of Jesus,—“If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments;” and the question of the

²⁰ But in reply he said to Him, Teacher, all these I have observed from my youth. ²¹ Then Jesus looking on him loved him, and said to him, One thing is wanting in thee. Go away ; sell what thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou wilt have treasure in heaven ; and come, follow Me, bearing the cross.

youth, "Which?" He gives the commands in a different order, following the Hebrew text. In the Septuagint the prohibition of adultery precedes that of murder ; so in the narrative of St. Luke, and so Rom. xiii. 9. Instead of Defraud not, which agrees practically with the tenth commandment, St. Matthew has the more comprehensive positive precept from Lev. xix. 18. This is omitted here, and in the report of St. Luke. It cannot therefore be supposed that to this precept, as enjoining *affection*, any special reference is made. The question respected *actions*, and to actions only do the commands directly refer. The first use of laws is the regulation of outward conduct by the expression of *will* concerning actions. The second and higher use of laws is the suggestion of principles ; and through the dispositions thus awakened a larger and better service may be obtained. But it is by the living exhibition of *character* that the highest moral results are secured, its assimilating influence being increased by faith and love. The first direction, to keep the commandments, is not given as the whole of duty, but as a part, that which was first to be regarded and which should be more fully considered. The precepts suggest principles, higher and more comprehensive, of which they are only some of the consequences. There are not two possible modes of justification, one by works, and another by faith ; but there are two stages of instruction, one prescribing outward acts, and another producing inward affections. Sinlessness has never been the conscious condition of men ; and without faith none can please God.

²⁰ The profession of obedience is not described as false. It referred only to actions, and did not claim more than sincerity of purpose. It is similar to many statements in the Bible (Luke i. 6 ; Ps. cxix. 44, 55, 68, etc.) : it was not reproved, but in connection with it we are told that Jesus loved him.

²¹ The words of Jesus are in reply to the question related by St. Matthew, "What is wanting in me?" and are preceded by the words, "If thou wilt be perfect." This second direction therefore has the character of an invitation, and is not strictly a command. Some duties may be enforced by authority, and for them a sufficient motive is found in the will of a master. But higher duties must be freely chosen, and their motive is the good which

²² But being grieved at the statement, he went away sorrowful: for he had large possessions.

²³ And Jesus looking round said to His disciples, How hardly will they who have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

Sec Dang Riche

is shown by a father or a friend. We need not suppose that the conduct of our Lord on this occasion was exceptional, and that a command, not given to others, was given to one, to manifest his weakness and wrong. Arbitrary appointments, as a moral discipline, are human inventions. The *actions* which are commanded are those which should be chosen, even if there be no corresponding *dispositions*. Those here described were not enjoined on all disciples, for they were good only for those who had the dispositions which would prompt to such a choice. The giving all his possessions to the poor was not the good work inquired for; and without love it would have been vain (1 Cor. xiii. 3). It was simply the condition of receiving at once the higher lesson that was asked for.

²³ His subsequent history is not related. If it might be inferred, from one of the following statements, that his riches prevented his entering the kingdom of heaven, it may rather be inferred from the other, that he became an example of the sufficiency of the Divine power to draw all men to the Saviour. He could not understand how it was possible for him to receive more good, and to do more good, in poverty than in wealth. He was sorrowful, because he found that he could but partially sympathise with One whom he knew to be good, and had not faith to follow in the steps of His self-renouncing love. This was to be gained by learning more of Him.

God only is Good of Himself, and all goodness comes from Him.

His commandments are the only way to eternal life.

Defective goodness is to be loved, and nurtured for perfection.

Renunciation of self, according to the example of Christ, is a privilege for all.

Sec. II. (Mark x. 23-27; Matt. xix. 23-26; Luke xviii. 24-27.) The conduct of the young man gave occasion to the lessons which Jesus

²⁴ But the disciples were amazed at His words. Then Jesus again speaking said to them, Children, how hard is it for those who rely on riches to enter into the kingdom of God! ²⁵ It is easier for a camel to enter through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

²⁶ But they were exceedingly astonished, saying among themselves, And who can be saved? ²⁷ Then Jesus looking on them said, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for all things are possible with God.

addressed to His disciples respecting riches. These, as sensible possessions, seemingly permanent, the objects on some account or other of universal desire, have always been unduly estimated. They are the resources and rewards of earthly kingdoms; but have no worth in the kingdom of heaven. The disadvantage of possessing riches is first declared; then the reason is given, in the reliance thereon which is generally produced; and lastly, the sufficiency of the Divine power is declared, to remove this and every other obstacle to the salvation of men.

²⁴ St. Matthew, as usual, has the expression, "the kingdom of heaven." The statement refers to the present as well as to the future, to the kingdom now established here, and to that which will be hereafter.

²⁵ The surprise of the disciples, and the explanation of Jesus, are mentioned only by St. Mark. Riches are declared to be dangerous, because they draw to themselves the trust and hope, which should rest on God alone. (1 Tim. vi. 17). It is not peculiar to rich men, that they are unwilling to risk their possessions, or to resign them when required.

²⁶ The expression is proverbial, but not hyperbolic. The camel is not a rope; nor is the needle's eye a narrow gateway: but the terms are to be taken literally. In the Talmud a similar proverb mentions the elephant.

²⁷ There are difficulties in the way of others; and these may have been supposed to be equal, or even greater.

²⁸ The statement made respecting the rich might be made respecting the poor. The Christian course is one, to the choice of which no earthly motives are adequate; and for its prosecution no human power is sufficient. Faith relies on the omnipotence of God (Luke i. 37; Gen. xviii. 14; Job xli. 2; 1

²⁸ Peter began to say to Him, Lo ! we left all things, and followed Thee. ²⁹ Jesus in reply said, Assuredly I declare to you, there is no one who leaves house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, on account of Me, and on account of the Good message ; ³⁰ but he will receive a hundred fold now in this time, houses and brethren and sisters and

SEC.
REWAR
DISCIP

Jer. xxxii. 17). The gospel of Christ is the power of God for the salvation of men (John xii. 32 ; Rom. i. 16 ; 1 Cor. i. 24).

Earthly riches are hindrances, and not helps, for the kingdom of God.

They draw to themselves the trust which should be given to Him.

Divine power can overcome all obstacles to human salvation.

SEC. III. (Mark x. 28-31 ; Matt. xix. 27-30 ; Luke xviii. 28-30.) In reply to the question of Peter, concerning the rewards to be received by those who forsook all things for His sake, Jesus declared that they would obtain a hundred fold here, and possess eternal life hereafter. But, to correct the worldliness and self-seeking which the question of the apostle betrayed, He declared also, that there would be persecutions with the present reward ; and that, in the future, the order of recompence would not be that which was supposed. This lesson was illustrated by a parable, recorded by St. Matthew, which does not teach that all will at last be equal, but that there will be no precedence on the expected ground, of more work and longer service. In morals, and religion, *works* are of value only as connected with *character* ; and of this the quality of works is more significant than the quantity.

²⁸ St. Matthew gives the inquiry "What will there be for us?"

²⁹ St. Matthew gives, before the general declaration, the special statement respecting the apostles ; which is similar to one made on another occasion, as recorded by St. Luke (xxii. 30). St. Matthew has "on account of my name ;" St. Luke, "on account of the kingdom of God."

³⁰ The specification in the promise, and the mention of persecutions, are peculiar to St. Mark. In the promise, which must be understood figuratively,

mothers and children and lands, with persecutions; and in the age which is coming, eternal life. ²¹ But many first will be last, and the last first.

fathers and *wives* are omitted; there being another metaphorical use of these relations (Matt. xxiii. 9; John iii. 29). All things become the property of Christians, as they are enabled to use all; receiving from all high enjoyment and lasting advantage (Matt. v. 5; 1 Cor. iii. 22; 2 Cor. vi. 10).

²¹ The same order of terms is given in Matt. xix. 30, but the reverse at the end of the parable, chap. xx. 16.

Much is to be relinquished for the sake of Christ and the gospel.

With present loss there is great gain, and an eternal reward.

They who begin early, and do much, are not always preferred.

The Preacher's Directory.

*Permanent Preaching for a Permanent Pastorate.**

It is impossible to look round this world and not see in the variety that is presented a distinction in things, as to the permanency of the impression they make. Some arrest attention, and fasten on the memory; others slip from our minds, and are for ever forgotten. Some delight at first; but the first delight is the very reason it is not lasting, a temporary interest is the prelude of a speedy decay. A Lombardy poplar and an elm are sure to make different impressions on every beholder; the poplar produces a short admiration, the elm is lasting . . . The ocean and a fishpond have different attractions. It is vastly important not to please too soon if we wish to please long; the rose is the queen of flowers owing to its reserved beauty and its endless variety. "The irregular combinations," says Dr. Johnson, "of fanciful invention may delight awhile by that novelty of which the common satiety of life sends us all in quest; but the pleasures of sudden wonder are soon exhausted, and the mind can only repose on the stability of truth." All this passes into the imitating works of man. The mirror keeps the laws of the landscape it reflects. We are never tired of some poems; and some astonish us at first, and every repetition weakens the pleasure:

Hæc placet semel, hæc decies repetita placebit.

I. Sometimes men of astonishing ingenuity exhaust their powers in a short time, because they refuse to follow the **PATH OF NATURE**. If I understand a conceit, it means a very pretty thought, very curious, but having no founda-

* This is abridged from a very interesting and valuable article in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. xix., by the Rev. Leonard Withington, D.D., Newburyport, Mass.

tion in natural suggestion and natural feeling. Thus the following thought in Shakspeare is a conceit—a *con-cetto*. When Prospero is describing his being put into *a rotten carcass of a boat*, and banished from Milan, he tells his daughter :—

The very rats
Instinctively had quit it; there they hoist us,
To cry to the sea that roared to us; to sigh
To the winds whose pity, sighing back again,
Did us but loving wrong.

Now every one sees that this description has no pathos in it, because it has no foundation in nature. The author meant to be fine, but he forgot that he must lose the simplicity of feeling in the profusion of his ingenuity. The concert of the crying victims to the roaring sea, one striking the tenor and the other the bass, we may suppose; and then the mutual sigh of the sea and the souls producing the *loving wrong* of the former,—what a frozen admiration it produces in every reader of taste! Such combinations cannot last. Notwithstanding the attempt of Rogers and Coleridge to restore to our perusal such writers as Thomas Fuller and George Herbert, I might safely defy any man to read either of them for half an hour on a stretch. Who ever read the whole of Young's "Night Thoughts?"* We no sooner enter the garden of his spices than we are suffocated by their fragrance. No relief, no plain interstices, no soft green for the eye to rest on: his peonies, his pinks, and his dahlias blush before us in the most crimson profusion; and his poetry has every excellence but simplicity and nature. Alas, a biased mind always turns to bad models. The faults of Young are owing partly at least to the beauties of Seneca; he has sometimes literally translated him. What

* The "reader" here suggests as query that *many have*. The writer has no doubt put it too strongly. The Editor, however, confesses to be one of those who have not read the whole of Young's "Night Thoughts," and that chiefly because of the reason suggested, "suffocated by their fragrance."—ED.

a pity it is that his susceptible eye could not have fallen on a passage in Pliny, in which he shows that the earth after a long drought, having been drenched in a shower, as it lies resting beneath a setting sun and spanned by a rainbow, emits a peculiar exhalation, to which the fragrance of no single flower can be compared! It is hardly perceptible at first; but it increases in sweetness as it gains on our attention, and would not exhaust its power should it continue for ever.

These are no new discoveries; Cicero saw them from his own experience. Hear his testimony: "A style of speaking," says he, "is to be selected, which especially detains the mind, which those who hear may not only hear with delight, but be delighted without satiety . . . Who can long drink or eat what is over seasoned? The slighter the stimulant the less the satiety. Thus in all things the greatest fastidiousness borders on the highest pleasure. We need not wonder it is so in public speech, because we can see, both from orators and poets, that a fine nice ornamented holiday strain, without intermission, without variety, cannot delight long, however beautiful the pictures or however bright the colours. It is true, in a spoken composition, whether poetry or prose, the disgust comes sooner because we judge by instinct more than by mental rule. When a composition is written (and read alone), these tawdry faults are known less by the ear and more by the judgment."*

The lasting man has a simple manner, true feeling, some substance, severe ornament; he is a child of nature, has great earnestness and little show; he never overdoes; he has no forced pathos, no pounding violence; he weeps only from the magnitude of the occasion, and he weeps but seldom. It is said I think of Washington that he wept only once during the revolutionary war; but they were terrible tears. The lasting man is likely to leave on the conviction of his hearers an impression

* "De Oratore," lib. iii., sec. 25.

of reserved strength; he completely loses himself in his subject; he never does his best; or if he does, it is a profound secret to every one besides himself. He has no pompous preparation about him; he sounds no trumpet, and he never gives an egotistic emphasis to his most original remarks. They steal from him free and limpid, like water from the spring beneath the rock. The lasting man turns even his impediments into facilities, and his weights are wings sometimes to exalt his flight. I have known very impressive speakers begin with stammering, and one I know who actually lisped. Paul, we may infer, was such a specimen. He was too modest a man to say it, but we learn the secret from what others said of him. What else can be the meaning of 2 Cor. x. 10? "*For his letters (say they) are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible.*" This last expression may be understood of the first ten paragraphs of his discourses. Nobody said this but he who went out of the meeting before he closed; for he once continued his speech until midnight, and only one fell asleep. The great secret is to touch a cord that will vibrate for ever.

II. There are two important elements which we must study to learn and join. First, an earnest discussion of the most important truths; and secondly, fully to unfold their bearing on the life and heart. Here we have Paul's example, who begins his epistles by stating and proving the most recondite principles of religion, and in the close shows how they bear on practice. No one can have all the ammunition for a lasting ministry who does not discuss. It will not do to follow Dr. Blair's example, who avoids the doctrinal as a pitfall. Whatever your opinion, wherever you stand, do not have any covered wells which you dare not open, any important topics on which you preserve a mysterious silence. On any subject on which the readers of the Bible must think, you must sometimes speak. . . .

And yet the obvious bearing of simple principles must

not be neglected. It is a great art to make the hortatory part of preaching impressive. It is the end and upshot of all principle. It is too often the case that the man that is successful in doctrinal discussion acquires an exclusive taste for it, and becomes negligent and weak when he passes into the practical part of his preaching. Let him resemble the oak, which, though yearly it swells and strengthens its massy trunk and branches, never fails to clothe their rigour with the trembling leaves of a living vegetation. It requires as much talent, perhaps more, to write an effective sermon on candour, meekness, patience, contentment, justice, fidelity, as on the higher points of systematic theology. "*These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.*" Like Samson, the champion must get hold of the *two* pillars on which the house stands, and thus kill the Philistines. This part of the work requires great effort, and should be studied. The union of these departments gives vigour to both. Practical preaching has double power when it grows out of fundamental principles. We must study the practical part in our own hearts and in the wants of our people. But it is well also to study models. One of the most beautiful is Dr. Evans, of London, "*Discourses concerning the Christian Temper.*" They are written with a severe simplicity, but great strength. Two other models may be mentioned, because their comparison and contrast are more instructive than their separate impression. I allude to Jeremy Taylor and Richard Baxter, both of them writers of great copiousness of matter and endless profusion of illustration. But what a difference! What superiority in the rich simplicity of one, over the hot-house abundance of the other! I never could accept the character with which Taylor has been delivered to us. He is never self-forgetful; he always detains you on the image; he plays his coruscations before you as the showman would his dissolving views; and you always admire the robe without thinking of the form that wears it. Now whatever Taylor *was* Baxter *was not*; so unconscious in

his art, so negligent in his profusion; snatching you in a chariot of gems to the goal of the journey you are impatient to finish. Perhaps it may assist us to put Taylor in his right place, to see how his ornaments struck his contemporaries. Dr. South has characterized him without calling him by name; and though South was a sullen man, he was a true critic. He never minced matters. In his 11th sermon, vol. v., speaking on simplicity in preaching the gospel, he says:—"I speak the words of truth and soberness," said Paul, "and I preach the gospel, not with the enticing words of man's wisdom." This was the way of the apostle's discharging of things sacred. Nothing here of the fringes of the north star; nothing of natures becoming unnatural; nothing of the down of angels' wings, or the beautiful locks of cherubims; no starched similitudes, introduced with a '*thus have I seen a cloud rolling in its airy mansion,*' and the like. No, these were sublimities above the rise of the apostolic spirit. The apostles, poor mortals, were content to have lower steps, and to tell the world in plain terms *that he who believed should be saved, and that he who believed not should be damned.* And this was the dialect that pierced the conscience, and made the hearers cry out, '*Men and brethren, what shall I do?*' It tickled not the ear, but sunk into the heart; and when men came from such sermons they never commended the preacher for his taking voice or gesture; for the fineness of such a simile, or the quaintness of such a sentence; but they spoke like men conquered with the overpowering force and evidence of truths that most concerned them; much in the words of the two disciples going to Emmaus, '*Did not our hearts burn within us while he opened to us the scriptures?*'"

III. I pass over the various topics suggested by the clouds and sunshine of passing events, all of which must have some utterance from the pulpit; though every pious preacher will abjure that poverty of mind which regards a storm, or the explosion of a steamboat, or an accident on a railroad, as a sort of godsend to eke out subjects

for popular attraction. I hasten to notice another mode of preaching, once current, now too much neglected; a mode most likely to secure to the humblest invention the riches of the Bible—THE ART OF EXPOUNDING.

Our early fathers thought much of this; but it has of late years very strangely fallen into disuse, to the great detriment both of minister and people. The pulpit has lost one of the brightest radiations of its glory. There is a general impression that it is unpopular; and the only reason is that it has fallen into reluctant hands. We can make any style of preaching unpopular by not learning our trade. If it is unpopular you must make it popular. The burning of the anthracite coal was exceedingly unpopular until people had learned how to use it. The truth is, there is no mode of presenting sacred truth so rich, so various, so impressive, so fascinating. You have all history, *rich with spoils of time*, to help you. It has this important benefit, that it connects your philological studies with your public ministrations; it keeps up your interest in biblical investigation; it makes you a better Hebrew scholar, a better Greek scholar; it makes you at once a familiar tenant both of the old world and new; and you bring down the wealth of the former to increase the accumulated importations of the latter; it leads you to inspect every part of the Bible, and the more you spend the richer you grow. I can conceive of nothing more improving than tracing the progress of language (the sacred language of God too), the laws of thought, the uniformity and variety of revelation—comparing the two opposite poles of the extremest ancient and modern life, and the Divine art by which God Himself unfolds His complicated purposes to man. "*A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.*"

One important point in lecturing or expounding on a chapter, a psalm, or a section, is selection; that is, with a quick eye to discover what is practical and proper for the people. This is the cumulative point of *all* legitimate investigation. We must not be pedants; we must not

attempt to lead the people through the mazes of learned wisdom, or learned trifling, which amuses the recesses of academic subtlety. Selection, skilful selection, must be your rule. You are to see with a divine tact what belongs to yourself, and what to offer to your people. Sift the material; and keep the bran to yourself, and offer the meal to them. This maxim of course belongs only to the evangelical class. If I were one of the Tübingen historical school, I should never think of a popular lecture on the Bible. Their investigations evaporate into nothing:

Rich windows, that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing.

The labourers of this school keep digging and scratching in their gold mine, amidst noxious gases and frail safety lamps, to bring up their glittering pyrites, which they have over and over again assured us are worth nothing. The Bible, if it be worth anything, has an end, a result; and that result can always be presented with the deepest interest to the plainest congregation.

The benefits of this mode of preaching are that you keep fresh your seminary lessons; you become a biblical critic; your Hebrew and your Greek never fade; they are renewed by little and little every week; you occupy rich ground; you forestall your own narrowing idiosyncracies; you are never at a loss for a subject; you throw yourself on the tow line of providence; you find wonderful coincidences; your discourses will have a surprising application; you are often faithful to existing sin, without seeming to design it; you are always sheltered behind a sacred shield; you neglect no part of revelation; you almost become a prophet of God; and you go to Egypt to encounter its corruptions and its hosts, with the rod of God in your hand.

A Mistranslation.

Sarah's (want of) Faith.

"Through faith he received strength, that even by Sarah herself he should have seed, and when past age, because he judged him faithful who had promised."—HEB. xi. 11.*

Is Sarah in this chapter adduced by the sacred writer as an example of faith? The answer to this question is much the same as whether the above rendering of the 11th verse, or that of the Authorized Version, be the more correct.

(a) The original words, not as printed in our editions but in the original MSS., will bear either construction equally well, there being no difference in form between the nominative and dative of *αὐτὴν Σάρρα* in the old MSS. The personal pronoun too in the Greek is left to be supplied by the reader, and may be either "he" or "she," according to the view of the context we adopt. In the 12th verse however we have the gender indicated, which is masculine, and therefore referring to Abraham, which our translators have correctly rendered. So that, looking merely at the grammatical construction of the passage, the translation given seems to be the more correct of the two.

(b) But when we consider the passage along with its context, several additional reasons present themselves for preferring it. It seems in the first place strange that the reference to Sarah's faith should occupy the position it does, should divide in two the sacred writer's description of the faith of Abraham. Abraham is the subject of the verse immediately before, and of the verses immediately after: if the writer intended to notice the faith of

* The writer is indebted to Professor Godwin, New College, for the interpretation of the above passage, expressed in the deviation observable from the Authorized Version, as many of his students will recognise.

Sarah he would have done so, we should suppose, after he had dismissed Abraham; or if he adhered to the chronological arrangement, would have merely coupled her along with Abraham.

(c) The strongest recommendation however that this interpretation should have for the biblical scholar is that it is more in accordance with fact. Sarah, so far from showing unusually strong faith in the promise that she should have a son, as the narrative in the book of Genesis shows, was more conspicuous for the weakness of her faith. For immediately on its being announced to her that she should have a son, she laughed in unbelief, and to cover her folly was guilty of a direct falsehood. True, it is recorded also of Abraham that he laughed; but his laugh was not the laugh of unbelief, but the laugh of joy. There is all the difference in the world between the two laughs. The one brought down the rebuke of the messenger, the other was the overflow of the old man's joy. Neither the spirit nor the letter of the narrative in Genesis is such as could warrant any one holding up Sarah for the imitation of Christendom as an example of *faith*. Some of us have even seen reference made to this passage in sceptical books as a palpable inconsistency with the Old Testament narrative, and adduced as fatal to the infallibility of the writer and the Divine inspiration of the book.

By adopting therefore the alteration in the translation suggested, we not only express the original meaning of the writer, but we remove from the carping and captious this handle for evil, and perhaps also a stumbling-block from the path of the weak. Erroneous translations, and whatever is akin to them, erroneous interpretations of God's word, put the disciples of Christ unnecessarily to disadvantage. Already, as remarked, the enemies of religion have pointed to the history of Sarah as irreconcilable with what is supposed to be the statement of the writer here, that she was a noteworthy example of faith.

In pointing out the fact that the writer of this book

makes no such statement, important service is rendered to the cause of Christ. The officer who discovers the fact that sand has been furtively mixed with the powder, and takes care that the deceit be rectified, is a better friend to his king and country than he who shuts his ears and eyes to the fact, and is content to use the powder as it is. The day of battle will show which was the wiser course, when the enemy's cannon is ploughing with its desolating fire through the ranks of the soldiery, and the cannon with the adulterated ammunition is doing little execution, falling short of the mark, and sounding as if only half charged.

Happily no doctrine or cherished conviction is in any way weakened or modified by this interpretation. The only effect of it will be the removal of Sarah from the cloud of witnesses. This however cannot be subject for much regret. The woman who received the promise of God with a sceptical laugh, as she heard it made to her husband by the angels, and then on being charged with it denied it, is unworthy in that transaction at least of a place among those who are held up as examples of faith to the wives and mothers of Christendom.

St. Peter, it is true, points holy women to Sarah as an example. But a glance at the context of that passage will show that the apostle represents her as an example only in the one respect of showing deference to her husband; "being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord; whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement" (or terror). So long as they do well in this respect they are the daughters of Sarah; but when they do well in the matter of faith, they are the daughters of one greater than Sarah. The compilers of the Prayer-Book evidently considered that this was the special reference of the apostle, as in the marriage ceremony they have given the passage a prominent and appropriate place among those that have reference to the wife's duties to the husband. When however we adopt the rendering

that the sacred writer, we think, purposed to convey, "that even by Sarah herself he should receive power to have seed," we give the honour to whom the honour is due. This brings to our notice a display of faith, exceeded only by another instance of the same patriarch alluded to immediately after in this chapter—his readiness to offer that son in sacrifice, in obedience to the command of God. Although he himself and his wife were both old, yet did he receive the promise of God with a reverential and confiding respect, and believed that through this son that was promised the land in which he was sojourning as a stranger would one day be peopled by his descendants, and that he would thereby become the father of many nations. And in view of this distant day he henceforth bears a name that indicated his great faith in this promise. He who was before only Abram (lofty father) was henceforth known as Abraham (the father of multitudes).

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D. LONGWILL.

Outlines.

Two Trains of Thought on Dives and Lazarus.

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day," etc.—LUKE xvi. 19–31.

I. The Future State.

THIS parable teaches the following all-important truths:—

I. It teaches that there is a future state.

Independent of revelation, all mankind, in every country and age, have arrived at the conclusion that the soul is to survive the body. Man's dread of annihilation at death, his longing after immortality, etc., are the considerations by means of which he is enabled to answer in the affirmative the question, "If a man die shall he live again?" Revelation confirms and estab-

lishes this hope of man and teaching of nature. While we hold with the utmost tenacity that the Old Testament plainly teaches the doctrine of a future state, yet it is Christ Jesus who has given us the fullest, plainest, and most uncontroverted revelation and proof of it. Christ taught this truth in the light which flashed from the encouragement which He gave to His disciples in face of persecution, "fear not them which kill the body," etc. He also taught it in the light of the Divine declaration, "I am the God of Abraham—God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." And in this parable He will have us to learn it in the light of hell's flames and heaven's glory.

II. It teaches that this future state is one of rewards and punishments.

What is most objected to in connection with the doctrine of a future state is that it is a state of punishment as well as of reward. Were it one of reward only, the objectors would, no doubt, very willingly receive it. But if we receive the teachings of nature, as these do, we must also receive the teachings of revelation, because both teach the same truths and both are liable to the same objections. Natural religion teaches us that God now both naturally and morally governs mankind upon this principle, viz. of rewards and punishments; and a great many of these rewards and punishments follow us up to the very confines of the world to come, so that all revealed religion has to tell us upon this subject is that what God has imperfectly begun here will be carried on in another world, and that, as it has been indicated in this passage, in a more perfect degree.

It is natural for us to expect that in a direct revelation from God this doctrine of rewards and punishments, like that of a future state, will be more fully and plainly set forth than in the indirect revelation of nature. Men, independent of revelation, have arrived at this truth; but it required to be more fully developed and more fully confirmed.

This doctrine began to dawn early under the old dispensation ; but under the new it has reached its zenith, and nowhere under the new does it shine more cloudlessly than in the text : the rich man opened his eyes, not only in a future state, but also in a state of torment. Lazarus was borne by angels, not only to another state of existence, but also to a state of reward. One opened his eyes in hell, and the other in Abraham's bosom.

III. It teaches that this future state of rewards and punishments is unchangeable, eternal.

A state of eternal punishment is objected to not only by infidels and Unitarians, but also by many who believe in the death of Christ as an atonement for sin ; but this latter class appear to us to be very inconsistent in believing the one and denying the other. Their doctrine virtually amounts to making void the atonement ; because if by the blood of Christ (as they do allege) all will ultimately be saved, and as those that will be saved from the earth will only be delivered from a temporary punishment, from what will His death deliver those who have been for a certain time in hell ? It is evident that it will not be from the temporary punishment included in the final sentence, because that will have been borne to its fullest extent ; and if it is not from punishment, it must be from nothing. However derogatory to the Divine character this doctrine may appear to some, and how pleasant soever restoration may sound upon the ear of the profligate and abandoned sinner, we dare not preach it, because the text says that "there is a great gulf fixed" between heaven and hell etc.

IV. It teaches that no natural relationship to any good man can deliver us from this state of punishment nor administer to us an entrance into this state of reward.

It is a great privilege to be bred and born in a religious family ; but God forbid that we should rest upon this foundation for life eternal. This rich man, no doubt,

thought much of his being of the natural seed of Abraham. He thought very probably, as all his nation did, that to be related by blood to the father of the faithful was enough to secure a place for him in heaven. The Baptist, knowing of this their ungrounded trust in Abraham, said, "O generation of vipers," etc. But alas, this son of the chosen seed found out, and that when it was too late, that to be thus related to Abraham was of no avail in delivering him from punishment: "in hell he lift up his eyes." There is no union whatever, save that of a spiritual union with Christ the Son of God, that can deliver us from the worm that dieth not, and administer unto us an abundant entrance into the kingdom above.

V. It teaches that the means which God has appointed to teach us concerning this future state of rewards and punishments are perfectly adapted to this end.

There is a tendency in sinners of mankind to believe that if God were to appoint some other means different to those He now makes use of, in order to restore the world, many more would be converted, and among them they themselves. The unbelieving and unrepentant sinner finds fault with everything and every body but himself. He will even hurl the blame back to God's face Himself; he is wiser than all; he knows better than God; he will say "nay" in the teeth of Abraham, "the friend of God;" he will say "nay" in the face of Moses and the prophets; he will say "nay" to the apostles and evangelists; and he is daring enough to say "nay" even to the Son of God and the Eternal Spirit. "But if one went to them from the dead they will repent." *No*, says reason. *No*, says experience. *No*, says Abraham. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Friends, if Moses and the prophets,—and with regard to you we may add and say, if Christ and His apostles—will fail to bring you repentant to the footstool of Divine

grace, to supplicate mercy through the finished work of the man Christ Jesus, you are undone; there remains not in the whole domain of moral influence a power equal to the task.

Pisgah Talywain.

RICHARD JONES.

II. A Striking Contrast.

IN this parable we have a very striking contrast between two men in life, in death, and in eternity.

I. *In Life.* (1) The one was rich, and the other was poor. The one had a costly mansion to live in, the other had no place where to lay his head; one was clothed in purple and fine linen, the other probably was clothed in rags; one fared sumptuously every day, the other fared upon the crumbs which fell from his table. (2) The one enjoyed a strong and healthy constitution; the other was miserably afflicted in his person. (3) The one was good, and the other was bad. Goodness on earth is often allied with poverty and suffering. Religion does not deliver from the ordinary afflictions of life. Earthly prosperity is no proof of the Divine favour: Job's friends thought that it was; Asaph was much confounded by it. Here we have a man enjoying all the comforts and blessings of life, yet destitute of the Divine favour.

II. *In Death.* Here we have—(1) Contrast laid aside; both died. Death is no respecter of persons; rank and station cannot ward off disease; the king of terror is dead alike to the enjoyments of the rich, and the miseries of the poor; he cannot be bribed by gold, nor enlisted by sympathy; in death the rich and the poor meet. Here we have—(2) Contrast reversed. The poor at his death was carried by angels to Abraham's bosom and the rich was carried by devils to open his eyes in torment. Here we have—(3) Contrast resumed. The rich man was buried; so, no doubt, was Lazarus. No

mention is made, it is true, of Lazarus' burial; but the silence is very significant of the greatness of the contrast. Such was the contrast between the two, that one was as nothing to the other.

III. *In Eternity.* In the other world the favourable points of contrast have all changed sides: they were on the rich man's side here; but they are on Lazarus' side there.

(1) The one that was happy here is miserable there; and the one that was miserable here is happy there.

(2) The one that was the beggar here is begged of there, and the one that was begged of here is the beggar there. The rich man begged of Lazarus, through Abraham, for a drop of cold water, and to go and preach to his brethren. The answers were, that the first request was impossible, and that the second, though possible, would be of none effect. There is a way from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth; but there is no way from heaven to hell, nor from hell to heaven. Begging is a miserable mode of livelihood here, but it is worse there. Here some one may pity us, but there no one will. The poorest beggar can get here what can't be got there, though importunately begged for.

(3) The misery of Lazarus and the blessedness of the rich man here were temporary, whilst the blessedness of Lazarus and the misery of the rich man there are eternal.

(4) The associates of Lazarus here were the dogs; whilst those of the rich man were the rich, the high, the noble, the wealthy. The associates of Lazarus there are Abraham, the angels, the Lamb; whilst those of the rich man are the dogs of hell, the devil, and his angels.

Pisgah Talywain.

RICHARD JONES.

*The People's Hour of Triumph, and Hour of Darkness.**I. Hour of Triumph.*

"And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word."—1 Kings xviii. 36.

LET us take two scenes from the life of Elijah : one in which he is victorious over his greatest enemies ; the other in which he seems to himself to be forsaken by God and men, and desires to die that he may be hidden from the vengeance of those who seek to kill him. In his life, as is the case in our own, we see the time of triumph succeeded by the time of depression. The long-wished-for victory fades away in disappointment.

I. The conflict between Jehovah and Baal.

(a) It is strange that the Jews so often fell into idolatry. They had had repeated warnings from the prophets, yet almost every temptation led them astray. The reign of Ahab was one of the darkest periods in the history of the kingdom of Israel. Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Tyre and Sidon, had introduced the religion of Baal. It is not certainly known what was worshipped under that name ; some say the sun, others the planet Jupiter.

At length only seven thousand persons were left who had not adopted this worship ; Ahab had joined in it. Then came a famine ; and after a long period of dearth it was to be publicly decided between Elijah and the prophets of Baal whose God was the true God.

Here arises the question of sincerity. No doubt the priests of Baal were sincere, or they would not have submitted to the test proposed. But sincerity was not sufficient. Are we then to dethrone sincerity ? Yes ; and enthrone truth. Next to truth, sincerity is the noblest thing we know ; but it must yield to truth. Doubtless many persecutors have been sincere ; but that

does not excuse them. Poison, sincerely taken as food, leads to death.

(b) The trial was this: two altars were to be erected on Carmel, one for Baal and one for Jehovah, and whichever god consumed by fire the sacrifice offered to him was to be regarded as the true God.

Elijah seems never to have feared the face of man,—neither of Ahab, nor of the priests of Baal. He mocked the latter before their followers,—“Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.” But there was no response. At evening he prepared the usual evening sacrifice to Jehovah. He had it covered with water, that there might be no possibility of deception. Then the fire fell from heaven, and consumed it. Never before did the beautiful summit of Carmel see such a sight; never will she again, so long as her base is washed by the waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

II. The manifestation of Jehovah.

(a) The prophet Elijah addressed God as Jehovah. This was His sacred name, it distinguished Him from all false gods. He also called upon Him as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, that is the God of the Jewish nation. Instead of worshipping Jehovah, the people had sought Baal, the deity of the idolatrous tribes around them, and bowed before him. This was then a national reproach to them.

(b) “Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel.” God does not give up His right to rule because we refuse to worship. If He gave up His authority all would be anarchy. Many think that if they do not serve the Lord He will let them alone. But as our Creator and Sovereign we owe Him homage, whether we wish to pay it or not.

(c) “And that I am thy servant.” Elijah’s message had been so long despised that he wished it to be made manifest publicly that he was the prophet of the Lord.

(17) "And that I have done all these things at thy word." Not for his own glory, not to be great in the eyes of the people of Israel; but by Divine command. The fire came, and with it his triumph.

Conclusion.—Contrast that gloomy dispensation with our bright one. How shall we escape if we neglect such mercy as we have? It needs to be made manifest that there is but one true God, who governs the world. And this manifestation has been made once for all through Him who came into the world as the only-begotten Son of the Father.

II. *The Prophet's Hour of Darkness.*

"And he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness," etc.—1 **KINGS** xix. 4, 5, 9-13.

We learn more from example than from precept. The human weakness of Scripture characters, as well as their spiritual strength, is shown us. We are taught as much by the one as by the other.

I. The human sorrow. After the prophet's triumph came his time of depression.

(a) When Elijah overcame the prophets of Baal it was his time of triumph. Then came the reaction. He heard of Jezebel's threat, and fled into the kingdom of Judah. He went alone into the wilderness about a day's journey from Beersheba. We can picture to ourselves the wearied old man resting under the shade of the juniper tree.* He complained of the failure of his life, and desired to die. Then there fell upon him sleep, God's gift to the wretched.

Thus it is with us; after our time of triumph comes our time of reaction. In the day of joy we scarcely believe it, but it is so. It is very difficult to make the

* "The word which is rendered in the Authorized Version 'juniper' is beyond doubt a sort of broom, *Genista monosperma*; it is a leguminous plant, and bears a white flower."—"JUNIPER," *Smith's Dictionary of Bible*.

child who has never before seen the sea understand that in a few hours the waters will have ebbed from the bay, and left it covered with long stretches of brown-ribbed sand and jagged rocks.

(b) It is so in the Christian life. We may have our hours of rapture, but they will be succeeded by our hours of depression. The glow of first love will not always last. Nor is it well that it should. It is beautiful, but not deep. The flowers must fall from the fruit tree, if the autumn store is to hang on its boughs. If it were not so, we should walk by sight, not by faith.

(c) It is so with temptation. Our sins often seem to be trodden down; but unless we are careful they will rise again. It may be painful to be told this; but it is true, and therefore it is well to know it.

(d) Is then our religion a delusion? By no means. It is a discipline. Look at the Saviour's hour of trial; it came after the glorious life, and before He was able to throw open the gates of immortality to all believers.

(e) After trial God sends sleep, or rest. "He giveth his beloved sleep."

II. The Divine consolation.

(a) But the time of refreshment came: it was the darkness before the daybreak, not the darkness of death; yet the deliverance was not such as the prophet wished. He was a wanderer for forty days more before he saw the morning.

Thus it is with us; our gloom lasts a long time, but not for ever. We do not understand Christ's way of working. We want to arrange everything. Yet it were better to put a child to manage machinery than entrust us with the concerns of our own lives.

(b) The prophet said all was dark, that there was no godliness left in the land. But the Lord showed him that it was not so evil as he feared,—seven thousand had not bowed the knee to Baal.

(c) After his journey of forty days, when he was at Horeb, the Lord commanded him to stand upon the mount.

First there came a whirlwind which rent the rocks, then an earthquake, and afterwards a fire. But God was not in these. With any of these forces He could have destroyed the guilty king and queen; but such was not His way of working. Last of all came a still small voice; and by this Jehovah spoke to His servant.

Thus God comes to us, and speaks to us, not with a voice of desolation, but with a whisper of love. The wind, the earthquake, the fire are the law; the still small voice is the gospel. Christ thus addresses us, and by it assures us of returning peace.

Conclusion.—Our day of triumph is not always our day of prosperity. In the silence of the desert, and the solitude of our own hearts, we have our deepest communion with God. He speaks to us, not in a voice of terror, but by the quiet consolations of the gospel of forgiveness and peace.

HERBERT BOWER.

The Divine Greatness and Condescension.

“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”—ISA. lvii. 15.

God changeth not. He is the same now that He described Himself to be then; and He entertains now that same regard for His people, He shows now that same condescension towards them, which are mentioned here. God does not dwell apart in yonder distant heaven, at a distance so great, at a height so exalted, as not to feel an interest in His people on earth, and provide for their safety and happiness; “for thus saith the high and lofty One,” etc.

Notice—I. A contrast between God and His people as regards *condition*. He is *high and lofty*; they are *low and humble*.

We may speak of heights and elevations by comparing

them with some standard of measurement ; but God is *beyond comparison*. “To whom will ye liken me ?” etc. We may imagine heights and loftinesses of condition and of character, but God is infinitely above and beyond our conceptions. He sitteth on “a glorious high throne from the beginning”—a throne unshaken by the rebellion of fallen angels, a throne untarnished by the sins of fallen man. He fills all time without beginning and without end ; “before the mountains were brought forth,” etc. God has no memory of the past, no anticipation of the future ; but future, past, and present are to Him but one eternal *now*. He is King of kings, etc., “the King eternal, immortal, invisible,” etc., “inhabiteth eternity.” In contrast to this, we observe the condition of His people. They are low and humble. Said the psalmist, “When I consider the heavens,” etc., “*what is man ?*” Let us think of ourselves in comparison with the *angels*—our tedious creeping compared with their rapid flight, our feeble strength compared with their immortal vigour, our puny interrupted labours compared with their untiring service. Let us look at ourselves in relation to the *works of God* : we are but specks on the world in which we live ; and this world in which we live is but a speck in the universe of God. Let us look at ourselves in relation to *Divine truth*,—as described in God’s word, sinful, depraved, and fallen. Thus shall we see our nothingness as creatures, our unworthiness as Christians.

Notice—II. A contrast between God and His people, as regards *character*. He is *holy*, they are *contrite*.

God’s holiness is acknowledged in heaven. “They rest not day and night, but cry, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty,” etc. God’s holiness is displayed in all His works and ways, in all His dealings with man, in all the arrangements of His providence, in all the requirements of His laws. It shone forth from mount Sinai ; the law of Moses was an expression of it ; but it is seen *most clearly* in the cross and death

of Christ. God's holiness will be shown to all at last by the everlasting banishment from His presence of all that is unholy. "God is light," "His name is holy." In contrast to this we see the character of His people. They are *contrite*. Contrition implies *sin*. A being that did never sin did never know contrition. Example of a truly contrite spirit in Psalm li. Humility is always connected with contrition; but contrition is not always connected with humility. The angels of God are *humble*, but not *contrite*. The Lord Jesus when on earth was *humble*, but never *contrite*, for He never *sinned*.

Notice—III. A contrast between the two *dwelling-places* of God. "I dwell in the high and holy place," in that *heart* too that is humble and contrite."

The "high and holy place" is heaven. Eye hath not seen it. "Ear hath not heard its deep songs of joy." No tongue can tell one half its wonders, no heart conceive its beauty and splendour. It is the temple made without hands. It is the city at whose gates of pearl all the paths of grace terminate, and in whose glorious courts all the mysteries of grace shall be explained. It is the most exalted home of life and intelligence and love. It is the centre of the power and wisdom and glory of Jehovah's kingdom, the more immediate residence of God Himself. In contrast to this we read, "I dwell with the humble and contrite spirit." See John xiv. 23. Each believer is the habitation of God through the Spirit. God *dwells* in his heart. It is His *abode*. We wonder that God should dwell with man; but when we think that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," that wonder is lost in this still greater wonder.

Wolverhampton.

J. B.

Redemption by Christ.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”—1 PET. i. 18–20.

INTRODUCTION. This passage is an argument for holy life. Christians are bought by the precious blood of Christ; therefore they are not their own, to live to themselves, but Christ’s, to live to Him.

In this text we have three ideas:—

I. THE ANTIQUITY OF REDEMPTION.—“Foreordained before the foundation of the world.”

(a) Of all Jehovah’s plans and works, priority is claimed by salvation.

(b) We willingly grant great antiquity to the earth we inhabit (especially after the late discoveries in geology); but we must grant the greatest antiquity to redemption. Christ was ordained to be a Saviour before He was ordained a Creator. Salvation by Christ was thought of before all material things, “before the foundation of the world,” and the “world” represents to us all material objects.

(c) This was providing a remedial plan ere the evil was in existence; it was not a second thought, arising from an actual exigency, but a provision made beforehand to meet the evil.

This shows three things:—

(1) That God was acting from foreknowledge.

(2) It shows the infinite wisdom of God; as a wise God He, prior to the existence of evil, devised a scheme to make even sin subservient to His glory.

(3) It shows the mercy of God. He could have foreseen the evil, and left us justly to perish; but He most graciously provided means of deliverance.

II. THE PRICE OF OUR REDEMPTION.—“The precious

blood of Christ;" "ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold."

(a) "Silver and gold" were an inadequate price; from their nature, being dead materials, they were only adequate for things of the same nature; there is appropriateness in silver and gold to the purchase of land, houses, etc., but not to the purchase of a soul.

(b) Life was required to save life, moral ransom for moral guilt. Life is the most precious of all things in our possessions. The word "blood" signifies life.

(c) Consider whose life it was, "the precious blood of Christ."

(1) This price is of adequate value, because of the *dignity* appertaining to Him who shed His blood. It was Christ, the Anointed of God, the only One found fit for this work.

(2) It was precious, because every requirement of God's law and justice was in Him, "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," "as of a lamb," innocent, suffering for another, "without blemish," perfect in holiness, nothing found wanting in Him.

III. THE OBJECT OF REDEMPTION.—To deliver us "from our vain conversation," or living, to live to Him who made us first, and bought us again from the bondage of sin and of Satan.

1. Mark the characteristic of all sorts of life, except Christian life,—*"vain conversation."* All other sort of living is vain, empty, nothing real in it; such as living to sin, to the world, to ourselves: and the only life real is Christian life.

2. Mark the source of this vain living, "received by tradition from your fathers." This vain living is an old-fashioned life; our ancestors lived so, we have received it as a legacy from them, nay even from our very first father, from Adam. A child easily copies the faults of his father; but we have received this corruption and vanity not only by example, but by nature. Adam, after he fell, begat a son in his own likeness, and so every

father leaves his likeness in his son. And there is nothing efficacious enough to take away this vanity from our life, except the precious blood of Christ.

Letterston.

B. THOMAS.

The Multitude in Amazement.

Acts ii. 12.

I. *A multitude gathered from all parts of the world.*

Ver. 9-18. The nations here enumerated must have spoken seven or eight different languages. The places named were in Asia, Africa, and Europe,—the whole of the then known world. Suggestive of the wide-spread influence of the gospel.

II. *A multitude gathered for religious purposes.* They had come to the feast of Pentecost. It is when assembled for Divine service that the gospel is appropriately preached.

III. *A multitude astonished by a miracle.* This miracle was really two-fold:—1. They heard Galileans speak in other tongues (ver. 7), Galileans proverbially ignorant and uncouth. 2. They heard in their own tongues every man, “the wonderful works of God.” The subject was *one*, the languages *many*. So:—1. In the gospel we have proof that by the foolishness of preaching God confounds the wisdom of the world. 2. Note the wonderful adaptation of the gospel to the entire world. It appeals to all natures and dispositions, and equally meets the wants of all.

IV. *A multitude variously affected.* All were amazed. Some *inquired*, some *mocked*. Some said (probably the devout men mentioned in ver. 5), “What meaneth this?” This language betokened a desire to learn. Others (ver. 13) said, “They are full of new wine;” regarding the religion of Jesus Christ as fanaticism. How does the gospel affect us?

Dawlish.

F. WAGSTAFF.

Reviews.

JESUS CHRIST; HIS TIMES, LIFE, AND WORK. By R. DE PRESSENSÉ, D.D. Second Edition, Revised. *Hodder & Stoughton.*

All lovers of the natural must rejoice that in modern paintings representing our Lord, His Divinity is no longer expressed by the old conventionalism of the encircling nimbus, but that in the august calm, the holy, the compassionate, the loving expression of the face, we read the truth that He is the Son of God. And no less thankful must be every intelligent lover of sincere religion that a corresponding change is observable in the portraiture of our Lord's life and character given us by the modern historian. There is a return from the formal and dogmatic mode of representing His character, which has long prevailed, to one that is more primitive and natural, that indeed adopted by the original evangelists, of illustrating His Divine character by what He says and does. Nothing more easy to the painter than to single out the God-man by encircling His head with the halo, but it requires the highest and most appreciative powers to convey the same truth by making the characteristics which stamped Him as Divine appear in the lineament of His face and the loftiness of His bearing. And powers no less exalted are required in the historian who undertakes to portray the Divine in the human, the Son of God in the Son of man. But how different in interest and in power is the Christ represented thus from the background of real human life, and the Christ presented abstractly in formal doctrine. "Too often the manhood of Jesus has been entirely sacrificed to His Godhead; divines have forgotten that the latter is inseparable from the former, and that the Saviour-Christ is not God hidden in a human form but God made man." Do Pressensé, while ever remembering that Jesus is Divine, never loses sight of the fact that He was also a man. He represents His life in all the historical setting of His age. He forgets not that the first historians of Jesus addressed themselves to readers who were their contemporaries, and who were perfectly acquainted with the scenes and circumstances

amid which Christ lived, with the condition of His country, and the character of His age. A few brief indications in their writings sufficed to enable Jews and Romans to represent to themselves not only the drama of the gospel history, but also the theatre in which it was enacted. Acquaintance with the scenes in which He moved, and the mode of thought of those He addressed, is absolutely necessary, in order to give anything more than a vague and abstract idea of the ministry and work of Jesus. "It is evident that what was then understood intuitively can now be grasped only by a vigorous effort of mind; knowledge is indispensable, to restore colour to the past, because it alone enables us to reascend the stream of time and make ourselves in a manner witnesses of the events."

A third of the volume is taken up with the discussion of preliminary questions, such as the Philosophical and Religious bases of the Life of Christ, The Supernatural, The connection of Jesus Christ with the past, The Sources of the history of Jesus, Doctrinal bases of the Life of Jesus. These and other kindred questions are treated in a philosophical and liberal spirit, and yet with an earnestness of purpose that is apparent in every page. "This book," he remarks in the preface, "has been written in troublous times, when a strong wind is blowing the men of our generation farther and farther from our most cherished convictions; it will soon be seen that this icy wind sows seeds of death on its passage, and blasts all on which it blows. Upon the shores towards which it is driving us we shall find none of the best blessings of life." The volume is full of freshness and beauty, and fails not frequently to throw additional light on the sayings and doings of Him who is its subject.

The manner in which the translation is executed is worthy of all praise, and adds not a little to the interest and value of the book. Miss Harwood proves herself thoroughly acquainted with the idioms of the French and English language, and capable of expressing herself in simple but forcible Saxon. If foreign authors had all been fortunate enough to be introduced to the English public in a garb so thoroughly English as clothes De Pressensé's *Life of Christ*, more of their works had, like this volume, attained to a second edition.

THE POWER OF THE PULPIT: WHEREIN DOES IT CONSIST?
By JOSHUA WILSON. *Hodder & Stoughton.*

Mr. Joshua Wilson has long taken a deep interest in the subject of preaching. His earnest desire has ever been that it should maintain and even surpass its former efficiency. The present pamphlet contains his mature thoughts upon the subject. Rather diffident of his own judgment, he has fortified his statements by ample quotations from authors of every denomination. The wide range of his quotations shows the earnestness and the diligence with which he has sought for the answer to the question he proposes, "Wherein does the power of the pulpit consist?" Mr. Wilson believes that the pulpit "has lost much of its ancient power." The chief cause to which this lamentable fact should be traced he considers is depreciation of doctrine. Preaching has become "ethical lecturing rather than biblical exposition, theological teaching, and evangelical preaching." A more lamentable cause of weakness, we humbly think, is the lifeless preaching of doctrines without the enthusiasm which a deep conviction of their truth and importance alone can inspire. If preachers spake more directly their own convictions, arising from the prayerful study of God's word, and spoke nothing but what they strongly felt, the pulpit would again be a power equal to what it was when the doctrines of the Church were the living thoughts and earnest beliefs of teacher and people. •

TWO FAREWELL SERMONS. By the Hon. and Rev. BAPTIST W. NOEL, M.A.

These sermons are upon the very appropriate text, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," and are good specimens of the simplicity and quiet earnestness of the self-denying preacher.

ADDRESS delivered at the FUNERAL of the Rev. THOMAS STEFFE CRISP. By the Rev. E. STEANE, D.D. Together with the **FUNERAL SERMON**, preached by the Rev. F. W. GOTCH, LL.D.

Two eloquent and appreciative tributes of respect to the memory, and testimonies to the Christian character and assiduous labours, of a venerable and highly honoured preacher and tutor. .

How Men find Christ :

THE PARABLES OF THE TREASURE AND THE PEARL.

BY THE REV. HENRY ALLON.

gain, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field ; the when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls : who, when he found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."—MATT. xiii. 44–46.

chapter furnishes a striking illustration of the method adopted by Matthew in compiling his gospel. It is a collection of seven distinct, and yet beautifully related parables, which could hardly have been spoken all together.

Peter's boat, in which our Lord sat and taught, and the people stood upon the shore listening. Mark and Luke, indeed, record some of the seven separately, in connection with other incidents. Even in Matthew's gospel two distinct pauses are marked between the present parables. Hardly therefore can we regard all the parables as spoken together, or as recorded in chronological order. After his frequent manner, Matthew groups them together, that he may combine in one view the teaching of our Lord on a specific subject. He would present to us a complete doctrine of the kingdom of God, the new kingdom which Christ came to set up. Hence there is the closest internal connection between the seven parables ; and although each is fraught with very im-

portant lessons, it is well in studying any one of them not to lose sight of its connection with the rest.

The seven parables set forth in outline the various aspects and developments of Christ's new spiritual kingdom.

The first four exhibit certain aspects of the new kingdom, as it presents itself to the eyes of men.

The parable of the sower speaks of the beginning of the kingdom of God; it unfolds the husbandry of God in the sowing of precious seed, with the various results of the sowing. The mixed character of the visible Church is shown in the parable of the tares among the wheat; evil seed as well as good is sown in human hearts. The parable of the mustard-seed represents the outward growth of the Church. And the parable of the leaven its inward assimilating power.

The other three parables exhibit the relations of the new kingdom to the hearts and lives of individual men. The treasure-finder stumbles upon truth; the pearl-seeker is in anxious quest after it; while the parable of the net represents the grand issue in the final judgment.

It is a wonderful representation of the character and processes, the lights and shades of the Church of Christ in the world. It is too a rich illustration of the wealth, and power, and beauty of the Saviour's teaching. Although alike in general character, each parable has its own distinctive teaching; it adds some essential feature to the entire picture; it presents some aspect or law of the kingdom peculiar to itself. How utterly we are overpowered and distanced at the rapid and varied opulence of the great Teacher! Illustrations follow each other in wondrous profusion; and in more wondrous fitness and

precision. The boundless riches of natural symbolism are at His command. It is as if nature herself had been prepared in order to furnish illustrations of His teaching ;—a kingdom of typical forms, of latent symbolisms ; for the interpretation of which He and He only possessed the key.

I have read to you, as the basis of my remarks on this occasion, two twin parables, such as often occur, standing related to each other as pairs, or correlates, presenting two separate aspects of one great truth or idea ; like binary stars, they revolve round each other.

Thus, in the parables of the mustard-seed and the leaven the progress of the kingdom of God is exhibited, first in its outward, then in its inward process. The parables of the lost sheep and the lost piece of silver again represent the gracious way in which God seeks the sinner, while the parable of the prodigal son represents the way in which the sinner is brought to seek God.

These parables of the treasure-finder and pearl-seeker represent the two methods by which men come to have a personal experience of the kingdom of God. If the parables which precede them exhibit the attitude of the gospel towards men, these exhibit the attitude of men towards the gospel. It is not merely the growing tree, over-shadowing all things in its neighbourhood ; it is not merely the leaven, affecting equally every particle of the meal into which it is put. It is a treasure, and a pearl, which the individual man must appropriate. It is not enough that he dwell where the gospel tree is planted, that he belong to a society in which the leaven is deposited : the tree may overshadow him, the leaven may affect him ; as the civilization and morality of

Christianity must, where they exist, affect all men. But more than this is necessary for vital membership in the spiritual kingdom : there must also be personal relationship, individual appropriation of the gospel ; and it is this in two of its forms that these parables set forth. They are closely related to each other, inasmuch as they have a common fundamental idea ; but they exhibit this common idea in different modes of operation.

Let us try then so to study them ; not merely to lay hold upon the general idea of the kingdom which each parable presents, but also to mark its individuality, its difference from the parable that resembles it the most nearly. It is thus, by a series of views so to speak, that we come to see the kingdom of God from all sides, and in all its diversified aspects.

Bearing in mind then that we are to speak of the feelings and conduct of men towards the kingdom of God, rather than of the kingdom of God itself, we observe—

I. That there are certain estimates of the kingdom of God, and certain things that are done in relation to it, which both parables agree in representing.

1. The first and most prominent is that both parables represent the gospel as a very precious thing, and as commending itself to men as a very precious thing. In the one parable it is represented as a treasure, money or jewels, buried in the earth by its fearful possessor ; to this day one of the most frequent expedients of the possessors of wealth in the insecure society of the east. In my recent journey in Palestine, our dragoman acknowledged that in Egypt he had money buried, that his savings might be concealed from the rapacity of the pasha. This

was very common when men were about to travel; they buried their wealth, often trusting no one with the secret of its deposit: hence, in the event of their death, it was lost to their heirs. Hence too the incidents in so many eastern tales, which represent persons as acquiring wealth by the finding of treasure. Perhaps our own proverb of "not leaving a stone unturned" has its origin in the search for hidden treasure. Hence also the common Scripture metaphor of seeking for wisdom "as for hidden treasure."

The metaphor of the pearl is equally suggestive of preciousness. The pearl is among the adornments of the monarch's crown; it is one of the most beautiful and costly of ornaments. A single pearl, dissolved in Cleopatra's cup, is said to have had a value equivalent to £200,000 of our money. Such indications of ancient value give intensity to the significance of the metaphor as employed here. When the pearl was large and perfect, "a goodly pearl," it had an almost incredible value. This, taken in connection with its natural qualities of purity and beauty, made it a striking emblem of that priceless possession of spiritual life, which is as precious to the heart as it is beautiful in the character. Other gems may be manipulated by human art, until it is applied their beauty is unrevealed; but the grindstone of the lapidary may not touch the pearl; perfect and beautiful, we wear it as God gives it: a fitting emblem therefore of the perfect gospel of life which God proffers us, or rather of the perfect Christ, God's great and glorious gift to the world.

The fundamental idea of both parables therefore is the incalculable preciousness of the blessings of the new kingdom. It was a familiar comparison: David had said

that true religion was "more to be desired than gold, yea than much fine gold;" and Solomon had said concerning wisdom, that "the merchandise of it is better than silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."

The preciousness of a new and holy spiritual life, of a forgiven and sanctified spiritual soul, of new relationships with God, of conscious love and service and likeness to Him, of assured help from Him, of communion with Him, of everlasting life from Him, infinitely transcends all temporal possessions, all bodily gratifications. A forgiven and holy soul must be the highest good of a man; and that which secures it must be the very chiefest treasure, the very pearl of human endowments. This, however, is only the Divine and true estimate of religion; there is another and a very different estimate of it. Practically, men neither acknowledge the gospel kingdom to be a treasure, nor do they admit its purchase to be worth much sacrifice. According to Christ's estimate it is a treasure worth every sacrifice; all the riches and honours and pleasures of life are not worthy of comparison with it. It would "profit a man nothing," were he to gain the world, if he lost his soul. But so far from agreeing with this estimate, so far from exalting spiritual interests above secular and carnal interests, so far from deeming them worth all their effort to secure them, the men of the world put them in a subordinate place; they "seek first" the things of this life, and leave the kingdom of God and His righteousness to be "added." Admitting that it is necessary to attend to religious interests before they die, they risk them upon the chance of a few

ours at the close of life, a death-bed repentance, a hasty prayer. Meanwhile, they will give to the things of the body years of patient toil and self-sacrificing solicitude, daily slavery in the city, nightly anxiety at home. This is the world's practical estimate; things unseen and eternal are not worthy to be compared with things seen and temporal. It would deem it little less than insanity for a man to give to spiritual things anything like the thought and effort that he gives to secular things. It allows eagerly every object of human pursuit, except the salvation of the soul. However you may present the claims of the gospel, however you may urge its vital importance, you can never get beyond the theoretic admission of the understanding. They neither "see with their eyes, nor hear with their ears, nor understand with their hearts;" their practical life remains unaffected; they will not believe the gospel report; Christ is to them "a root out of a dry ground," without "form or comeliness,"

Now it may be, dear friends, that some of you thus estimate and treat the gospel of Christ. You do not call in question Christ's estimate of it as a treasure, as a pearl of great price; but you do not practically seek it, you do not make sacrifices to secure it. Only your understanding and your conscience assent to the representation; it is endorsed by neither your heart nor your life. You excuse yourselves by evasive pleas from practically acting upon the admission; and thus you make it incumbent upon preachers of this gospel, where otherwise they might speak to you joyously concerning its grace, sadly and solemnly to charge it home upon you that you are neglectors of the great salvation.

Christ however intimates *His* estimate of His gospel by comparing it to "hidden treasure," to a "pearl of great price;" He represents it as "unsearchable riches," meeting the deepest need and satisfying the highest aspirations of men's spiritual nature.

2. The parables further agree in representing the secret character of the spiritual blessings of the new kingdom. It is treasure "hidden in a field," it is a pearl hidden in the sea.

The spiritual nature of gospel blessings, the spiritual life which they produce and nurture, are not patent to every observer. The kingdom of Christ, as a visible, social organization, is one thing; the kingdom of Christ, as an inward spiritual life, is another. Religious acts of worship and of service are not necessarily acts of spiritual devotion and affection. All men may see and comprehend the social organization, the outward act of religious duty; but there are thousands who see in the kingdom of Christ nothing else, who are utterly unable to appreciate, even to recognise the deep, devout, and fervent spiritual life that lies beneath these, and without which no social membership, no religious act, can make a man a member of Christ's kingdom. It is not that God's purpose of salvation was a "mystery hidden from ages and generations," and revealed to the world only in the "fulness of time;" it is not that Christ's character and work were veiled under the typical forms of the older dispensation: it is that true spiritual life, the life of the inward spiritual soul, is in its nature and processes incomprehensible by unspiritual men: a social organization they can understand, a ritual of worship they can understand, a code of moral precepts they can understand; but

they cannot understand that being "born again" which was such a mystery to Nicodemus.

Just as it requires a poetical faculty to understand poetical life, an artistic faculty to understand art life, a moral faculty to understand moral life, so it requires a spiritual faculty to understand spiritual life; "spiritual things are spiritually discerned." There is nothing arbitrary, nothing mysterious, nothing peculiar to spiritual religion in this; it is the natural law of all things; a man must have faculty and sympathy, to understand anything. Hence the frequent statements of Scripture concerning the spiritual life, that it is "hid with Christ in God," that the "veil must be taken away" from the heart. "The natural man perceiveth not the things of the spirit." Christ indeed gives this as one of His reasons for speaking by parables,—that the people had no spiritual discernment.

How many walk in the very field of the treasure, and pass it by! How many even dig in the field for happiness, in some form or other, and miss the true treasure—seek their bread in common husbandry, and do not suspect the wealth that lies so near them! They pass it by, they tread upon it, but are unconscious of it; they possess the revealed word of the gospel, hold the Bible in their hands, read its very sentences, live in the very blaze of its spiritual light, and yet fail to perceive its spiritual character and preciousness. On every hand an extensive Christian machinery is set up, the land is filled with Bibles and churches, millions every Sunday join in Christian worship and listen to Christian teaching; constantly treading so to speak the field in which the treasure is hidden, constantly handling the shell in which the pre-

cious pearl is contained, decently conforming to the ritual of Christian worship, and to the practice of Christian duty : but how few find the spiritual treasure ! Do we not constantly see how possible it is for a man to master the scheme of Christianity, so as to become a theological oracle or gladiator, expounding and defending points of Christian science, and yet never realizing spiritual, religious, inward life ? Truth may be admitted to the understanding, and yet have no regenerating presence in the heart.

There are many reasons why men should frequent the field in which the treasure is hid. It is beautiful with many a flower, and fragrant with many a herb. Its verdure is soft and pleasant. It has many a grateful shade, many a refreshing resting-place. But we can discover its hidden treasure only by the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit. He quickens the instincts that direct us to it ; He gives us yearnings that prompt us to dig for it. He gives us discernment to recognise it ; and thus He connects our personal will and effort with the grace that provides the treasure. It needs the "quick and powerful" sword of the Spirit to "divide asunder the joints and marrow, to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart," and thus to open a way for the heart to receive the precious treasure. By His inward quickening the Holy Spirit produces the faculty for discerning the spiritual treasure ; and the voice of the truth, which before was heard only by the understanding, is now heard by the heart. Passages, which we had read a thousand times without a solicitous thought or a trembling emotion, now start from the page as if written in fire by God's own finger. The parable is applied to us ; "Thou art the

man " is the application of every representation, of every record of human sin, of every declaration of Divine salvation; the old familiar scripture has forced its way through the domain of the understanding, and into the domain of the heart. We have found the pearl of great price, we have found the treasure hid in the field.

3. The parables agree further in their representation of the earnestness and determination with which the precious treasure of the gospel is secured. To purchase it both the treasure-finder and the pearl-seeker sell all that they have; they give up everything that comes into competition with it. In unfigurative language, they sacrifice everything that would hinder the spiritual life and salvation of their souls—whether things outward, such as wealth, honour, or pleasure, or things inward, such as gratifications of sense, intellectual dogmas, or social habits. The man really determined on the salvation of his soul devotes every possession, every power, every energy to secure it; he "counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord." "One thing is needful," and he chooses "the better part;" he "sells all that he has" for the pearl of great price.

There is great significance too in the expression, "*for joy thereof he selleth all that he hath.*" It is a simple and beautiful representation of the man's emotions. So far is he from a grudging purchase, so far from the huckstering of the market, that he boldly and gladly "counts out the price thereof." He is only too thankful to possess it, even though all that he has is expended in the purchase. The things which have hitherto been his glory have "no glory now by reason of this glory which excelleth:" no compulsion, no urgency is necessary; he

“presents his body a living sacrifice,” a “reasonable service.” His is the exulting joy in Christ which filled the apostle Paul when he “counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ”; with eager enthusiasm he immolates his idols, crucifies his lusts; he glories only in the treasure which he has found.

Such joy of heart is an essential condition of the reception of Christ. Christ will not come into unwilling hearts; He will not enter hearts that are opened by a mere sense of duty. He will come only to those who love Him, who deem His presence their highest honour, His salvation their most precious thing. It needs moreover a holy passion for Christ to expel the unholy passions of sin, one strong affection to supersede another. A cold sense of interest or of duty cannot keep the heart for Christ—only a passionate love for Him; worldly joy will give place only to spiritual joy, the love of the world only to the love of Christ.

“All that he has :” this is the ultimate test of earnestness; men are willing to give much, not always willing to give all. “Sell all that thou hast” was the Master’s requirement of the young man who wished to be His disciple. The price was too great, and he “went away sorrowful”—an utter contrast to him who “for joy thereof sold all that he had.” He wished for Christ; he loved Christ above all things, so loved Him that he felt no surrender for His sake a sacrifice. Only thus, by a love greater than all other love, can men win Christ.

II. Thus far the lessons of the two parables are common, their lines are coincident; but now they broadly diverge, and teach us very important lessons concerning the diversities of the Christian life.

1. The first point of difference is in the ways in which the riches of the kingdom are discovered. There are only two ways by which men attain to spiritual religiousness, either by a sudden conversion after a career of thoughtlessness and sin, or by the spiritual grace of a godly and consecrated life from the beginning. These two ways of attaining the blessings of the kingdom are represented in the two parables: the treasure-finder stumbles upon his prize, apparently unexpectedly; the pearl-merchant finds his in earnest and systematic search for it.

First we see a man carelessly walking in the field in which the treasure lies hidden, intent perhaps upon some other business, or sauntering in mere enjoyment of its freshness and fragrance—thinking least of all of the treasure upon which he stumbles: or we may conceive him employed in ordinary husbandry, ploughing his field, thinking only of the harvest that it will yield; when he is startled by the ring of metal, and sees the gleam of gold in the furrow; he finds wealth of another kind than he expected. Manifestly our Lord intended by this to represent the man intent on worldly things, and without any thought or solicitude about spiritual things;—the man of careless, emotional, impulsive temperament, who neither perceives nor suspects the spiritual things that lie near to him and are ready to challenge his attention. He walks the world with a heedless, worldly heart, rejoicing in its good, failing to see any high moral aim or purpose in it; familiar with the forms and influences of Christianity, but recognising no spiritual life or power beneath them: when, suddenly, by some arresting providence, or sermon, or inexplicable suggestion of thought, the truth is re-

vealed to him. He is not seeking it, he stumbles upon it. He came into the church, it may be with his usual carelessness and vague unspiritualness; he joined in the mere surface worship of singing and prayer, and submitted himself as usual to the tedium of the sermon: when some commonplace sentence perhaps fell into the midst of his thoughts and feelings like a shell, his soul was in a tumult, he saw as he had never before seen his own deep spiritual necessities and the rich provision that God has made for them. He stumbled [upon the gospel treasure, made an unexpected discovery of its value. He was not altogether destitute of candour and susceptibility, but hitherto he had slumbered rather than sought. He had no urgent impulse to seek, although he rejoices to find.

In the other parable we see a man who is *engaged in seeking pearls*, exerting his skill and industry in their quest; and while thus seeking he finds a pearl incomparably more precious than any that he has hitherto found. The thing that he finds therefore is *of the same kind* as the thing that he seeks, only it is a finer pearl than he ever hoped to find. Had he been seeking merchandise, or gems of other kinds, and accidentally found a pearl, the case would have been different and almost identical with that of the treasure-finder. But they are pearls that he seeks, and it is a pearl that he finds; and when he finds it he sells all the inferior *pearls* that he possesses, that he may become the rightful proprietor of this one. He gains therefore precisely what he sought. He is seeking the right thing, only the pearls that he has found hitherto are defective in quality and of inferior value.

Evidently this is not the representation of a careless, worldly, unspiritual man, who does not so much find the

gospel as he is found by it. It is the representation of a man whose desires and efforts are right, but who does not all at once find the thing that he wishes. It is the representation of the truth-lover and truth-seeker, the man who feels that truth and goodness are the true dignity and blessedness of life, and who under the influence of high and noble moral feelings seeks for "whatsoever things are true and pure and just and lovely and of good report." The inquiry "What is truth?" "Who will show us any good?" is a real and passionate solicitude with him. He seeks with determination, perseverance, and wisdom, if by any means he may attain to it; he consecrates to its pursuit all the energy of his mind, all the love of his heart. Many pearls he gathers, either hoping to find among them some one that will satisfy him, or, more probably, thinking to find truth and satisfaction in the sum of them. Possibly he seeks to know wisdom, cultivates art, labours as a philanthropist, is a rigid moralist, living in all good conscience. His pearls are the virtues and graces of human life, and he carefully gathers them that he may weave them into a crown. But though so earnest a seeker of pearls, he has not yet found the pearl of great price. At length he is directed to Christ; and in Him he finds a pearl of truth and goodness so transcendent that he "sells all that he has," even all other pearls that he may have found, that he may possess this. It is the *one* pearl amongst the many, that alone can satisfy him. His habits as a pearl-seeker have prepared him for the appreciation of this; his life was made up of virtues, but none of them was essentially spiritual as this is. "Touching the law he was blameless"; but even all this, the very "things that were

morally a gain to him, he now counts loss for Christ." Honest and earnest in his first religious life, God rewards him with a higher and truer religious life; he was "of the truth, and he heard Christ's words."

Are there not many who answer to this type of character? When we charge indifference upon men, it is a charge to be understood with many exceptions. There are many who have not yet attained to the spiritual life of the gospel, but who are yet genuine and solicitous truth-seekers; acquainted with the gospel theory, they wish to comply with it; but failing in a perception of its inward spiritualness they do not recognise either their own spiritual need or the provision for supplying that need which the gospel makes. They resemble the better class of the Jewish Pharisees, such as Nicodemus, Gamaliel, and Saul of Tarsus; "ignorant of God's righteousness, they go about to establish a righteousness of their own;" they seek pearls of moral perfection; they aim at the mastery of evil passion, at the moral control of their daily life. Concerning many of the commandments they could say, "All these have I kept from my youth up;" they yearn for perfect truth and purity: but they do not yet know that these are to be realized only through the spiritual life of the gospel. And because of their sincerity and earnestness the Spirit of God "guides them into all truth," discovers to them the pearl of great price; and in Jesus Christ they find all that they have so long and so laboriously sought—truth, forgiveness, holiness, satisfaction. And by an utter self-renunciation they obtain Christ, "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ."

The history of the Church is full of instances of men

illustrating both these processes of finding Christ: men suddenly arrested by Christ, unexpectedly meeting Him; and men earnestly seeking for what is true and good, and having Christ revealed to them. There is the Samaritan woman for instance, who was thinking of nothing less than the Saviour of her soul, arrested and converted by His words. There is the thief on the cross, whose life had been a life of crime, saved in his death hour. There is the jailer at Philippi, awakened, convinced, and converted in the tumult of an earthquake. Dr. Doddridge tells us of Colonel Gardiner waiting for the accomplishment of his midnight wickedness, arrested by conviction, and converted into a penitent disciple then and there. So there are prodigals who have "gone into the far country," men who have been absorbed in worldly things, suddenly aroused, arrested, and reclaimed—the crust of their insensibility rudely broken in, and a new perception, a new spiritual life, given to them. Christ is "found of them that sought Him not." Every Church register is full of instances of this way—the treasure-finder's way of God's meeting with men. This is what we mean when we speak of conversions under sermons; and so commonly do we expect conversion in this way, that we almost forget that there is any other way of finding Christ. Thank God, the proportion is increasingly the other way. There are more and more who find Christ as pearl-seekers; children of pious homes who grow up in godliness, who never need converting under sermons. Happy will it be for the Church and the world when all are such.

As illustrations of the pearl-seekers finding the pearl of great price, we have good old Simeon, "waiting for

the consolation of Israel ;” Nicodemus coming to the great Teacher by night ; Cornelius, first a devout Gentile, then a devout Jew, visited by Peter with tidings of the true Christ ; the Ethiopian eunuch to whom Philip joined himself ; Lydia praying by the river side ; and above all the apostle Paul, an earnest truth-seeker, notwithstanding his blind persecution of the Christians. He had “served God from his forefathers with a pure conscience,” his soul was in sympathy with everything high and noble, his first Pharisaic religious life was as sincere and conscientious as his second Christian religious life. All these are pearl-seekers, finding the pearl of great price. In subsequent times Augustine yearning for truth, and finding it in Christ ; and Dr. Chalmers preaching Christ in the moral way in which alone he knew Him, and finding in the course of his honest, eager study, Christ the Saviour and the life of men. Such are the different ways in which God meets men.

2. But the different ways in which men meet God are also indicated in the contrasted emotions and conduct of the two finders of treasure ; and these are in exquisite harmony with the characters described.

The man who unexpectedly finds treasure in a field is boisterous, impulsive, passionate in his joy ; his agitation is very great, he loses self-control, and acts in a rash impetuous way ; he hastily hides his treasure again, and straightway goes and buys the entire field, that he may effectually secure it. The pearl-finder, on the other hand, although joyous, is calm and intelligent, with the discipline and self-possession of a habitual truth-seeker.

Nothing is said about the morality of what the treasure-finder does, about the law of treasure-trove, or about

the right or wrong of concealing the knowledge of the treasure from the owner of the field. This is not the point of the parable.

The parables indicate therefore a very striking difference of character—the difference indeed between the jailer of Philippi and Cornelius. The treasure-finder, in both his fear and his joy, is carried away by emotion. He regards his treasure with fluttered palpitating thoughts; he is overpowered by his rapture; he can scarcely believe himself a converted man; he is “like to them that dream; his mouth is filled with laughter, and his tongue with singing;” he is full of the tremulous fear of a newly found joy—shy, awkward, and rash; is it not too good to be true? While the pearl-seeker is calm and collected in his joy; he has been a pearl-seeker all his life, an inquirer after truth, a thinker about religion. He knows the value of pearls. Although greatly delighted therefore, he is not overpowered with his pearl of great price; he has found only what he has been seeking.

And how characteristic and true the representation of the excited treasure-finder—buying the entire field in which his treasure was found! Does not this represent the feverish unintelligent way in which such characters realize their salvation? Not only do they secure the spiritual treasure, but they accept all the accidents of Church life with which it may be associated, the entire denominational field in which it is found. According as the field in which he finds his treasure is an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, or a Congregational field, he forthwith becomes Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Congregationalist. In the enthusiasm of his joy, he does not distinguish between the treasure and the field in which

it is found. He thinks that the only field in which treasure can be found; and without any intelligent judgment he attaches himself to that peculiar form of Church life or doctrine. All this is very natural, and in its way beautiful; only we must not attach as much importance to the field as we do to the treasure; we must not think that treasure can be found in no other field. Such a man receives the truth in connection with a good deal of rubbish—prejudice, sectarianism, one-sided doctrine. He is more or less narrow-minded and ignorant; but he is a good and a saved man.

The pearl-seeker buys only the pearl; he does not buy the fishing ground in which he has found it. His intelligence as a pearl-seeker saves him from the indiscriminate errors into which the other man falls. He "proves all things, and holds fast that which is good." He is comparatively free from prejudice, for he has sought truth everywhere. He is discriminating, for he knows that truth has always its matrix and shell, is always found imbedded in fallible forms of human thought. He chooses his Church and shapes his doctrine intelligently. He lays hold of truth in its pure forms, unwarped by prejudices, unfettered by traditions. He distinguishes the essential from the accidental—the spirit from the letter. He appraises his purchase at its independent value. He mixes neither "wood, hay, nor stubble," with the spiritual edifice of his character. This is a very high form of character, rarely realized in perfection, but often approximately so. Who does not know such men? Good and generous in their sympathies; with an eye to discern good in all things—even the "soul of good in things."

It suggests to us the transac-

ditions to the Church; of men, that is, who have been educated as truth-seekers, "trained up in the way they should go"—men who enter the Church with intelligent apprehension of what it is, and of what they are doing, thoughtful, discriminating, virtuous, with settled habit and power of self-direction. May we hope that the parable is prophetic? Hitherto the Church has been chiefly furnished with the treasure-finders: it has depended wholly upon conversions of the pulpit; it has been recruited chiefly from an outlying world. Every Church had its harvests, and its gleanings of conversion; periodic movements of religious feeling, when the unnaturalness of the world has been broken in upon and converts have been converted. Thus Romanism has hadansenists; Germany its Mystics; England its Puritans; the last century its Methodists; and in the present century American and other revivals;—multitudes of treasure-finders, men introduced into the Church by sudden conversions. Such has hitherto been the present dispensation; and so long as men grow up godless and need thus converting, we pray God that it may continue.

But this is not the highest condition of things. It is the way in which all will be brought to "know the truth," from the least even to the greatest." This can only be by *conversions*, by adult sinners becoming adults, however numerous. The parable points rather to a dispensation of educational influences; when men "fear the Lord from their youth," when there shall be an unbroken heritage of sainthood, the children growing up instead of the fathers; when the Church shall be multiplied by a uniform hereditary faith, by

Timothys rather than by Philippian jailers. These are the characters that will make the Church wise, and strong, and holy.

And already we see the beginnings of this dispensation—the children of the Church more uniformly introduced into it. Hardly can an instance be adduced of a man rendering great service to the Church who was not an early disciple. It was concerning Timothy that Paul wrote, “I have no man likeminded, who will equally care for your state:” while apostates multiplied, Paul could rely upon the perseverance and consistency of Timothy, upon his wise holiness of character founded upon the influence and habits of a pious youth.

The age of pearl-seekers will be the golden age of the Church, the maturity and consummation of society. Let us strive and pray that it may come. Let us as parents and teachers seek God’s grace and blessing upon our children. Let us expect an ever increasing proportion of pearl-seekers, until at length adult conversion shall be no longer necessary, and our “children shall be holy, every one.”

We see then how diversely men may be brought to the experience of spiritual religion; how diversely they may give expression to the new religious life that they have found; and how perfect may be the religious goodness and satisfaction of each.

Let us learn then to be charitable in our judgments of men, to recognise the equal genuineness and goodness of different modes of conversion and of religious life. One man’s experience is no rule for another: we may not question the genuineness and value of a conversion because it does not resemble our own; a Lydia may not

object to the tumultuous excitement of a jailer ; a jailer may not question the quiet process that brings a Lydia to Christ. One may have his heart broken ; the other her heart opened : " there are diversities of operation, but the same Spirit."

And let us not be unjust to ourselves. How often we draw unfavourable inferences concerning our own religious life, because our processes of thought and feeling have not resembled those of some one else. Let us remember that many processes may lead to the same issue, that there is no uniform type of spiritual life, much less of the changes and feelings which lead to it. The motions of the Spirit are not restrained to one mode of action. It is enough if we can appeal to the great Heart-searcher, " Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

The one thing needful is to find Christ ; no matter how or where He is found. Let each one then ask himself concerning this, Is mine the treasure, mine the joy, mine the life which is eternal ?

The Gospel according to Mark.

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH NOTES.

BY PROF. J. H. GODWIN.

BOOK II.

Last Journey, and Ministry in Jerusalem.

PART I.

Last Journey. Lessons of Self-denial.

DIV. III. *On Worldly Honours.* (X. 32-52.)

Sec. I. ³² Now they were in the road, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them, and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And again taking

DIV. III. (Chap. x. 32-52.) Another stage in the journey to Jerusalem seems to be shown in this division; for the Jordan being crossed, there would be again exposure to danger. And another group of incidents is here related, illustrative of self-denying love—the third prediction of the death of Christ, the lessons to the apostles respecting ambition, and the example of the Saviour's condescension in stopping to attend to the request of a blind beggar.

SEC. I. (Mark x. 32-34; Matt. xx. 17-19; Luke xviii. 31-34.) Coming now to the country where the power of the Pharisees was not restrained by the authority of Herod, Jesus went before His disciples. He left for a while their company, and going forward alone showed His readiness to meet every peril. They followed, not understanding His conduct; and soon after heard the third prediction of His death and resurrection. His sufferings and dishonour are now described more definitely, and His delivery by the priests to the Roman government is indicated.

³³ The feelings of the apostles at this time were such as they had expressed some time before, when Jesus proposed to leave Peræa for Judæa,—“Rabbi, the Judæans but now were seeking to stone Thee, and dost Thou go there again?” Their apprehension of great danger to themselves is shown in the words of Thomas, “Let us also go, that we may die with him” (John xi. 8, 16).

aside the twelve, He began to declare to them what was soon to happen to Him. ³³ Lo we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles; ³⁴ and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him: and on the third day He will rise again.

³⁵ And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, went unto Him, saying, Teacher, we wish that Thou wouldest

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³³ St. Matthew says that this prediction, like the other two, was spoken to the disciples privately.

³⁴ St. Matthew adds the statement, "they will crucify Him," and St. Luke, "all things will be accomplished, written by the prophets of the Son of Man." In the first prediction of His death special reference is made to the wickedness of the Jews; in the second to the will of God; and in the third to the cruelty of the Gentiles, and their ignominious treatment. In all these predictions, Jesus spoke of what would happen to the Son of Man. This general expression made it possible for the apostles to suppose that another person was referred to. The people said to Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains for ever. And why dost Thou say, that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" (John xii. 34.) The apostles knew that Jesus was the Christ, and that He had spoken of Himself as the Son of Man. But the same title might possibly be given to another; and this seemed to them more probable than that their interpretations of Scripture, and their expectations of the continuance of Christ with them, should be wrong. Therefore they did not understand His words. This is said by St. Mark of the second prediction, and by St. Luke of the second and third.

Some anticipation of trials is a preparation for their endurance.

Jews and Gentiles combined to increase the shame and suffering of the Saviour's death.

SEC. II. (Mark x. 35-45; Matt. xx. 20-28.) The statements of Jesus respecting His death were not understood by the apostles: but from all His words and actions they learnt that the contest so long continued with the

do for us whatever we may request. ³⁶ Then He said to them, What do you wish Me to do for you? ³⁷ And they said to Him, Grant to us that we may sit down, one on Thy right, and one on Thy left, in Thy glory. ³⁸ Then

rulers of the country was coming to a close; and they expected the speedy establishment of the kingdom of which Jesus had lately spoken to them, and in which they were to be princes (Matt. xix. 28). Salome, the mother of James and John, presented a request on behalf of her sons, asking for the chief places in the kingdom of Christ. The request was theirs also, whether repeated by them or not; for to them the answer was given, according to both evangelists. In reply to the question of Jesus, they professed their readiness to share His lot, and were told that this would be granted them; but that the precedence which they sought would not be given by Him, as they supposed, from personal favour, but only according to the Father's will. The ambition of the two brethren naturally displeased the other apostles, who also had failed to receive fully the instruction which Jesus had before given them on humility. This lesson is therefore repeated, with a contrast, and a reference to His own conduct, which was to be their example. This dispute is not mentioned by St. Luke, but one similar is related subsequently, with statements similar to those now made, and with a promise similar to that before given (Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 29).

³⁵ St. Matthew states that the mother came with her sons, and spoke for them; and he gives the first question of Jesus in the singular, as addressed to her. If the singular form was used, the sons were referred to as well as the mother; and if the plural, she was included. By the general petition, leave was asked to present a petition for some special favour (1 Kings ii. 14, 20).

³⁷ These positions in the court of an earthly king were given to those who had the highest power and honour.

³⁸ A cup is a general symbol, and may denote either prosperity or adversity. It is used for what is *good* (Ps. xvi. 5, xxiii. 5); and for what is *ill* (Ps. xi. 6, lxxv. 8; Isa. li. 17). The sufferings of Christ are thus referred to, Mark xiv. 36, John xviii. 11. To drink of the same cup is a figurative expression for sharing the same lot. To receive the same baptism was not to be baptized with water; for not by this were the two apostles to be associated with their Lord. Once before, Jesus had referred to His sufferings as a *baptism*, and this when speaking of the conflict with the world, to which the disciples were conducted by Him (Luke xii. 50). But He never referred to His sufferings or to theirs, as waves by which they would be

Jesus said to them, You know not what you request. Can you drink of the cup of which I drink? and be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized? ³⁹ And they said to Him, We can. Then Jesus said to them, Of the cup of which I drink, you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be bap-

overwhelmed, or as a sea in which they would *sink*. The terms *baptize* and *baptism* are never used in the New Testament, either literally or figuratively, as in common Greek. They occur more than a hundred times, either for a rite of consecration with water, or for a corresponding spiritual reality. The repetition here employed supports this interpretation of the term. There were not many kinds of *overwhelming*, but there were many kinds of *baptism*—of purification, or consecration. To be overwhelmed with the overwhelming with which He would be overwhelmed, would be an accumulation of terms that would terrify but not instruct. To be consecrated with the consecration wherewith He was consecrated, is an expression both instructive and encouraging. It agrees with the statement, "And for them I consecrate Myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth" (John xvii. 19). Baptism denoted a separation from things unholy, a consecration to God; and in the sufferings of Christ there was this. The apostles describe the service of suffering, as the baptism by which disciples are associated with Christ (Rom. vi. 4; Eph. iv. 5; Col. ii. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 21). The Jewish rite of baptism was merely a sign of some special purification; and the Christian rite referred to the Spirit, which was poured forth from above. The rite itself had no reference to suffering. But all the lessons of Jesus taught that the purification and consecration of His followers would be received, in the experience of much painful sacrifice and conflict. They would, through this baptism, be crucified, and buried, and raised with Him. As they were buried in baptism, so were they also crucified; and the rite no more represents burial than crucifixion. In addition to the proofs already given that, in Hebraistic usage, the term denoted a rite of purification with water,—indicating its importance, but not the mode of its performance,—the usage of the Greek fathers, and of the earliest versions, should be considered. From the beginning the term has been used, as it now is in every Christian country, as the name of the rite, with a reference to its meaning, but without any regard to its mode. Origen, Chrysostom, and Theophylact, in commenting on this text, say that Christ called His sufferings a baptism, because thereby He *purified* the world, and not because he was immersed or overwhelmed.

tized. ⁴⁰ But to sit on My right and left, is not Mine to give, but to those for whom it has been prepared.

⁴¹ And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased because of James and John. ⁴² But Jesus calling unto them said to them, You know that they who are esteemed leaders of the nations, have dominion over them, and their great men exact from them ; ⁴³ so however it will not be among you. But whoever wishes to become great among you, will be your minister ; ⁴⁴ and whoever of you wishes to become first, will be servant of all. ⁴⁵ For the Son of Man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister ; and to give His life a ransom for many.

⁴⁰ There is the same use of the conjunction, iv. 22, ix. 8. Jesus declared that the rewards and honours of the kingdom of heaven would be bestowed by Him ; but they would be given only according to the will of the Father (Matt. vii. 22, xvi. 27, xxv. 31 ; Luke xxii. 29 ; Rev. iii. 21.)

⁴² A similar contrast is presented in the words of Jesus subsequently, as related by St. Luke (xxii. 25).

⁴³ Similar statements had been made to them previously (ix. 35). The words as recorded by St. Matthew are, " Let him be your minister."

⁴⁵ Jesus spoke of Himself as *ministering* to the apostles (Luke xxii. 27) ; and He is said to have been a *minister* to the Jews (Rom. xv. 8). He here declares the service of mankind to have been the object of His life ; and as His life was for the good of all, so was His death. He gave Himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. ii. 6 ; John iii. 16 ; Heb. ii. 9 ; 1 John ii. 2). The *many* are of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews (John xi. 52 ; Isa. liii. 10). A *ransom* is, primarily, the price paid for a deliverance from some ill ; and a *redemption* is, commonly, a deliverance so obtained. In the redemption of Christ, through the shedding of His blood, the giving up of His life, men are said to be *redeemed* from all iniquity (Tit. ii. 14),—from a vain course of conduct (1 Pet. i. 18). They are *delivered* from the present evil world (Gal. i. 4), from the spirit of bondage (iv. 5), from the fear of death (Heb. ii. 15), from the dominion of Satan (Acts x. 38 ; Col. i. 13 ; 2 Tim. ii. 26), from the future punishment of the wicked (1 Thess. i. 10). They are *saved* from their sins (Matt. i. 21). Men are not redeemed *from* God, but *by* Him, and *for* Him. The salvation of Christ includes a deliverance

⁴⁶ And they came to Jericho. And as He was going out from Jericho, with His disciples and many people, Sec.
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from punishment; but it is never in the Scriptures referred to as simply this, or chiefly this. Men may be delivered from the external consequences of sin, without a change of character, but only from these; and the salvation of Christ is not such a partial deliverance. It is a complete salvation from all evil, and from sin as the greatest. He must be received as a Saviour from all sin. The preposition translated *for* is used where there is any *reason*, and where there is *exchange*, and where one object is put *instead* of another. But it is often employed where there is no substitution, so that this cannot be the meaning of the word (Matt. xvii. 27; Luke xix. 44; John i. 16; Eph. v. 31; Heb. xii. 2). Wherever there is the suffering of one *for* the preservation and good of another, the suffering will be, in some sense, *instead* of the loss or pain thereby prevented. But the expressions are not equivalent. When the latter is used, attention is directed to suffering alone, and to its similarity, in character and purpose, to that which is averted; but with the more general expression it is not so. Jesus often spoke of His death as *for* the salvation of men; and so did prophets and apostles, times without number. But it is never in the Bible described as punishment *instead* of punishment. Its character was a service of faith and love; and its purpose and reason are given, not simply in the release of men from punishment, but in all the blessings comprehended in the salvation of Christ,—the liberty of the glory of the sons of God (John x. 10; Rom. viii. 21; Gal. iv. 5; Heb. ii. 10).

Worldly ambition is natural, but contrary to Christian love.

Disciples have to serve and suffer with their Lord.

The honours of His kingdom are not as those of earthly kingdoms.

They who are highest and have most should serve most.

Jesus Christ is the great example of self-sacrificing love.

His death was for the redemption of mankind from all evil.

Sec. III. (Mark x. 46–52; Matt. xx. 29–34; Luke xviii. 35–43.) Jesus, with the disciples, passed through Jericho, which was about twenty miles from Jerusalem; and when leaving He was accompanied by many people, who were also going to the festival. A blind beggar by the wayside heard

the son of Timæus, Bartimæus, the blind, was sitting by the road begging. " And having heard that it was Jesus

the voices of the multitude; and learning that Jesus was approaching, he called to Him for pity. When told to be silent he persisted in his cries, till he was invited by the Saviour to present his request. Then his sick was commanded, his sight restored, and he followed with the disciples. According to St. Matthew there was another similar case, and the two are in his narrative mentioned together; some of the peculiarities being omitted of the one case related by St. Mark and St. Luke. Their reports, agreeing exactly in every particular, must refer to the same event. The miracles of Jesus were very many; and St. Matthew has on several occasions noticed their plurality, where the similarity of events, not far separated in time, would admit of their combination in one narrative. He has thus associated the cure of two blind men, and of two demoniacs (viii. 23; ix. 37). There is no improbability in the subsequent cure of another blind man, whose case was sufficiently near and similar to justify its association by one writer, but not so near and important as to require the notice of all. When an agreement in one thing leads naturally to agreement in others, these have not the unlikelihood of separate coincidences. This cure is related by St. Luke before the narrative of what took place when Jesus passed through the city; but he does not state that it preceded. If we had only his narrative, it would of course be supposed that the cure preceded. But this would only be an inference, and is shown to be wrong by the more definite statements of the other evangelists. They both state expressly, that Jesus was going out from Jericho, when that happened which they record. If St. Luke had said that what he related took place when Jesus was going into Jericho, then it must be supposed, either that he refers to an event altogether different, or that his statement of time applies only to the first application; the second, and the cure being on the following day. But he does not say that Jesus was then entering the city, only that He was near to it (xviii. 35; xix. 29). There are three sections in his narrative referring to Jericho. If St. Luke was unacquainted with the order in which events occurred, he has made no wrong statement. It is however most likely that he intentionally disregarded the order of time, as on some other occasions where there is a small deviation from a chronological arrangement, this not being always of chief importance (iii. 19; iv. 8-31; v. 29; viii. 4). Many reasons might be assigned for his placing first in the series that which happened last. It may have been in order to connect the miracle of illumination with the preceding statement of the ignorance of the apostles (xviii. 34); or to connect the parable occasioned by the approach to Jerusalem, with the

of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, Son of David, Jesus, pity me. ⁴⁸ And many charged him that he should be silent; but he cried out much more, Son of David, pity me. ⁴⁹ And Jesus standing still, bade him be called. And they call the blind man saying to him, Have courage, arise, He calls thee. ⁵⁰ Then casting off his cloak, he rose up and went to Jesus. ⁵¹ And Jesus in reply to him, said, What dost thou wish I should do for thee? Then the blind man said to him, Rabbouni, that I may receive sight. ⁵² Then Jesus said to him, Go away; thy faith has restored thee. And directly he received sight, and followed Jesus in the road.

narrative of the *journey* there (xix. 11–28); or to place the manifestation of the Saviour's *compassion*, and the devout *acknowledgment* of the people, (xviii. 43) before the *admonitory* lessons and awful *prediction* of the parable (xix. 27). There is certainly not the least contradiction in the various reports of this miracle, while the differences demonstrate the independence of the writers.

⁴⁸ The proper name is only given here, and it follows the descriptive designation, as in the cry of the blind man. St. Matthew does not say that the two were beggars.

⁴⁹ He had heard reports respecting Jesus from travellers, and predictions respecting the Son of David from the Scriptures, and he believed these testimonies (Isa. xxxv. 5). The same Messianic appellation was used by other blind men.

⁵⁰ Some may merely have wished him to wait; by others he may have been deemed, as the little children were, unworthy of the Saviour's notice.

⁵¹ The words of the people, and the action of the blind man, are mentioned only here.

⁵² The question of Jesus is the same that was addressed to the two apostles (x. 36). And His conduct was an illustration of the statement that He came to minister. Rabbouni is said to be more reverential than Rabbi.

⁵³ St. Matthew does not give the statement respecting faith, but says that Jesus touched the eyes; St. Luke gives the healing word, and says that all the people also praised God. Similar declarations respecting faith are given

PART II.***Last Ministry in Jerusalem.*****Div. I. Symbolic Events. (XI. 1-33.)**

I. ^{phal} AND when they were near to Jerusalem,—to Bethphage and Bethany,—at the mount of Olives, He sent two
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by St. Mark (v. 34), by St. Matthew (ix. 30), and by St. Luke (ix. 50; viii. 48; xvii. 19; xviii. 42).

Christ came to open the eyes of the blind, and to be the Light of the world.

He did not disregard the meanest, and was ever ready to do good.

Some wait long in darkness before obtaining the help desired.

Faith perseveres, receives encouragement, and attains its end.

PART II. The public ministry of Jesus began in Jerusalem, and ended there. From the first He was opposed by the Pharisees and the rulers; and after a few months He withdrew into Galilee (John ii. 19; iv. 1). Their hostility was increased by His visit to Jerusalem in the following spring; when they sought to kill Him, and He again returned to Galilee (John v. 18). They followed Him there, seeking to destroy Him; and then He withdrew into the country of the Gentiles (Mark iii. 6; vii. 1, 24; viii. 11, 27). When He again came to Jerusalem in the autumn, the rulers sought at once to apprehend Him (John vii. 82), and the people subsequently to stone Him (viii. 59). On another visit, in the winter, He experienced similar treatment, and then retreated to Perea (x. 31-39). He returned for a few days to Bethany, to restore Lazarus; but was again driven from Judæa by the determination of the sanhedrim that, whether innocent or guilty, He should be put to death (xi. 53). In these circumstances it was needful, either that He should give up His ministry to the Jews, or give up His life. Not hastily, but with foresight and deliberation, He at length came back to Jerusalem for the last time; to declare by word and act, before the assembled nation, that He was the Messiah. This Part contains an account of the

of His disciples, ²and said to them, Go away to the village lying before you, and directly on entering it you will find a foal fastened up, on which no man has sat. Loose and bring it. ³And if any one say to you, Why

public ministry in Jerusalem on the first three days of the week, ending with the predictions concerning it which were spoken to some of the apostles, on the evening of the third day, or on the next morning. The supper at Bethany, after the preceding sabbath, is reserved for the next Part.

DIV. I. The triumphal procession, the purification of the temple, and the destruction of a fruitless tree,—are the three events, of historical and doctrinal importance, which marked the commencement of the last ministry in Jerusalem.

SEC. I. (Mark xi. 1–10; Matt. xxi. 1–11; Luke xix. 29–44; John xii. 12–19). When near Bethany and Bethphage, Jesus sent two disciples to the latter place, to obtain a foal on which He might ride into Jerusalem. The service required was readily given; and, according to ancient prophecy, the King of Zion appeared as a peaceful and gentle sovereign. He was attended by crowds coming from country and city, who strewed the road with garments and palm branches, and raised songs of praise and welcome. According to St. Luke, the Pharisees asked Jesus to check the cries of the multitude, but He accepted and justified their acknowledgment; and then declaring the doom of the guilty city, He wept over it. The whole city was excited by His arrival; many, according to St. John, having gone out to meet Him on account of the raising of Lazarus; and the rulers confessing that their opposition to Him was vain. He went into the temple, saw its magnificence and its disorder; and then, when it was evening, returned with the apostles to Bethany.

¹ St. John states that this was on the morrow after the supper in Bethany, which was six days before the passover (xii. 1–12). Bethphage was nearer to Jerusalem than Bethany, which was about two miles distant, the road passing over the hill which overlooked the city. A similar mission of two apostles preceded the passover (xiv. 13).

² The superhuman *knowledge* of Jesus was, in this simple way, shown to the apostles. He could see what they could not, of the present; and knew what they did not, of the future. St. Matthew mentions the ass as well as the colt. Animals not before used for work were selected for sacred service.

³ The style of address shows that the message was sent to a disciple. St. Matthew notices that the entry of Jesus into the city, in this manner, was

are you doing this? say, The Lord has a use for it: and directly he will send it here.

⁴ Then they went away, and found a foal fastened up at the door, outside on the high road; and they loosed it. ⁵ And some of those who stood there said to them, What are you doing, loosing the foal? ⁶ And they said to them, as Jesus directed them. And they let them go.

⁷ And they brought the foal to Jesus, and put on it their garments; and He sat upon it. ⁸ But many spread their garments on the road; and others cut sprays from the trees, and spread them on the road. ⁹ And they who went before, and they who followed, cried out saying, Hosanna! Blessed be He who comes in the name of the Lord. ¹⁰ Blessed be the coming kingdom of our father David. Hosanna in the highest!

¹¹ And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple. And having looked around on all things, the hour being now late, He went forth to Bethany with the twelve.

according to the description given by the prophet. This is also mentioned by St. John, with the unconsciousness of the apostles at the time that they were fulfilling the Scripture.

⁶ St. Luke says that the owners of the animal were the speakers.

⁸ This was a popular demonstration of loyalty, begun by the disciples, and carried on by the multitude.

⁹ The Hebrew term is an expression of acknowledgment and prayer—"Save now"; St. Matthew has, "Hosanna for the Son of David"; St. Luke, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord"; St. John, "Blessed be the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord." The acknowledgment of the people was in terms taken from a psalm which celebrated one great deliverance, and so foretold another (Ps. cxviii. 25, 26).

¹⁰ St. Matthew states that the whole city was moved, and St. John that the Pharisees said, "The world is gone after Him."

¹² And on the morrow, when they came out from Bethany, He was hungry. ¹³ And seeing a fig-tree at a

Sec.
Purifica-
tion of
Temple
Second
Day.

Divine knowledge, authority, and dignity, were manifest in Christ.

His kingdom prevails by truth, and meekness, and love. He is the predicted King and Saviour, the representative of God.

Sec. II. (Mark xi. 12-19; Matt. xxi. 12-17; Luke xix. 45-48.) Returning the next day, they came to a fig-tree which belonged to no one; and having ascertained that it was without fruit, Jesus declared that it should not yield any more, and then went on with His disciples to Jerusalem. In the temple He found those who sold sacrifices, and exchanged coins; and He commanded them all to leave, that the place of worship might not be disturbed by traffic, and defiled by dishonesty. He then taught in the temple, and cured the lame and the blind; and the children now repeated the songs of praise which the people had spoken on the previous day. Jesus was again asked to restrain such an acknowledgment, but He again justified and accepted it. The miracles and the praises of children are mentioned only by St. Matthew, who does not distinguish between the events of this, and the preceding day. St. John relates a similar purification of the temple, in connection with the first passover. He only mentions that event, the narratives of the other evangelists not referring to this period of the public ministry of Jesus; and having recorded the one, he takes no notice of the other. The events are so like, that the mention of one might well occasion the omission of the other; but the narratives are so different, that they cannot be regarded as referring to the same event. Both are in entire accordance with the character of Jesus. No violence is attributed to Him, and none should be supposed. Without the support of the people, His moral authority alone would be quite sufficient to secure a temporary cessation of what was confessedly wrong. The priests, for the sake of gain, and from contempt of the Gentiles, allowed the outer court to be used by those whose business was with the sacred offerings. There is no improbability in the renewal of the abuse, and the consequent repetition of the deserved reproof.

¹² The destruction of the tree, and the purification of the temple, are here expressly referred to the day after the triumphal entry. Jesus had probably withdrawn from the disciples, when they took their evening meal on the preceding day, and therefore was hungry.

distance, having leaves, He went there—perhaps then He will find something on it. And coming to it, He found nothing but leaves : for it was not the fig-season. ¹⁴ And speaking to it, He said, No more for ever may any one eat fruit from thee. And His disciples heard it.

¹⁵ And they came into Jerusalem. And Jesus entering into the temple, began to expel those who sold and bought in the temple ; and He overturned the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of those who were selling the doves. ¹⁶ And He did not allow that any one should carry a vessel through the temple. ¹⁷ And He taught, saying to them, Is it not written, *My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations ?* But you have made it a den of robbers.

¹⁸ And the scribes and the chief priests heard it. And they were seeking how they should destroy Him ; for

¹³ By a peculiar expression the writer avoids attributing to Jesus an erroneous expectation. He came near to the tree, that its fruitless condition might be seen by the apostles, for whose instruction it was withered. The leaves showed that the tree was living. It might possibly have retained some of the last year's produce, or have had some early fruit ; but this was shown not to be the case. It was in the usual state of fig-trees at that time, without fruit, because the fruit season had not come (xii. 2). Some fruit might possibly be on it in April, but the first season was not till June ; and therefore the absence of fruit could be no occasion for surprise, or offence. Fruit may appear on fig-trees before the leaves, but not fruit fit for food. The miracle here related is a parable, the meaning of which is shown subsequently. St. Matthew gives together the destruction of the tree, and the discourse to which it led. He says, that the words of Jesus were at once effective ; but not, that the effect was immediately seen.

¹⁷ The scripture referred to is Isa. lvi. 7. The censure is expressed in the words of another prophet (Jer. vii. 11).

¹⁸ The popular favour, which for a time prevented the apprehension of Jesus, is mentioned by St. Luke in the same connection. By the other evangelists it is noticed on other occasions.

they were afraid of Him, because all the people were astonished at His teaching. ¹⁹ And when evening came, He went forth without the city.

²⁰ And in the morning, when they were passing by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots. ²¹ And

SEC. I.
The Dead
Tree.
Third Day

The Jewish temple was for the worship and profit of all nations.

Peace and purity should be maintained in the service of God.

Those who are occupied with sacred things become better or worse than others.

SEC. III. (Mark xi. 20-26; Matt. xxi. 18-22.) Returning from Bethany on the morning of the third day, the disciples observed that the fig-tree, which yesterday they saw flourishing, was to-day utterly withered. They directed attention to its speedy destruction, and were told by Jesus that they should learn therefrom *the power of faith*. He said nothing of the sin of hypocrisy, or of the danger of impenitence; but spoke of the duty of trusting in God, repeating the lesson before given on this subject. Then, to guard them from supposing that the gratification of resentment might be the will of God, and might be sought in faith, He repeated the lesson on forgiveness. St. Luke, on another occasion, relates a parable which shows the doom of impenitence; but in all the particulars which make the parable most appropriate for this lesson, the miracle is different. The one was addressed to the multitude, the other to the apostles only. In the parable the fig-tree was planted in a vineyard, it was fenced and cultured; and, though barren year after year, it was still spared for another season before it was cut down. But this fig-tree grew by the roadside, it belonged to no one, and nothing had been done for its improvement; yet it had yielded fruit in former years, and was fruitless now, merely because the fruit season had not arrived. It is not described as a barren tree, but simply as one without fruit. This is not said to be the reason of its destruction. The fact that it was without fruit was ascertained before it was destroyed, but it was not destroyed because it had no fruit. Another lesson was given. The apostles needed to learn that Jesus was able to destroy, as well as to save. Without this, His submission to the power of the rulers might seem to be involuntary. His miracles hitherto had shown only His power to save. He gave them one

Peter remembering it, said to Him, Rabbi, lo, the fig-tree which Thou cursedst is dried up. ²¹ And Jesus in reply said to him, Have the faith of God. ²² For assuredly I declare to you, that whoever shall say to this mountain, Be removed, and cast into the sea, and shall not be divided in his mind, but shall have faith that what he declares is coming, he shall have whatever he says.

sign to show that He had power to destroy. But He would not use man for this purpose, nor animals, nor any useful thing. He selected an object that had life without sensibility, the destruction of which would be an injury to no one; and by His word caused it to wither away. The miracle is one of the most striking manifestations of the gentleness of Christ. There was no passion, or disappointment, or displeasure; but the use of a fit material object, for a high moral purpose. The following lessons are on the power of faith, and its proper exercise. With encouragement in respect to faith, there is warning in respect to forgiveness. If they did not forgive, they would not be forgiven. The fig-tree in the parable is a most fit representation of the Jewish nation; but this cannot be said of the fig-tree on the roadside. Its leaves were not in themselves worthless; and there might be fruit with them at a later time, though none fit for food could be found before the early season. To the Jewish nation, the season for fruit had come again and again (Matt. xxi. 34).

²¹ St. Matthew says that the disciples expressed their wonder.

²² The faith of God expresses more than faith in God. He is not only the Object of faith, but it is His also, because required, produced, and rewarded by Him.

²³ The mountain referred to was that over which they were walking. The promise must be understood figuratively; for the literal performance of such works, if possible, would never be proper. And it must be connected with the expressed condition—the faith of God. That any should obtain whatever they desire by asking for it, is nowhere the promise of the Bible. Only what God has encouraged us to seek can be sought in faith. Strong desire, and much asking, are no reasons for expecting that what we seek will be granted; unless we have a direction from God, assuring us that what we desire is really good, and according to His will. The expectation which is founded simply on desire is presumption, and not faith. The expressions given by St. Matthew are, "If you have faith . . . and whatever you request in prayer, having faith." He records a similar lesson

²⁴ Therefore I declare to you, All things whatever you request in prayer have faith that you receive, and you will have them. ²⁵ And when you stand praying, Forgive, if you have aught against any one; that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your offences. ²⁶ But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your offences.

in connection with the cure of the demoniac child, whom the disciples could not restore (xvii. 20).

²⁴ This promise is more comprehensive than the preceding, but it is limited by the same condition, and respects only what is sought *because of faith*.

²⁵ The lesson on forgiveness is not here repeated by St. Matthew, having been before recorded by him in another connection (vi. 15). The destruction of the fig-tree is not mentioned by St. Luke; but the same lessons on faith and forgiveness are related by him on another occasion (xvii. 4-6).

There is a destruction which serves God, and is according to His will.

Faith has power for these works, as well as for those of restoration.

Without love, there is not faith, either to receive forgiveness, or to effect works of power.

The Preacher's Directory.

*Method in Sermons.**

THE true design of method is founded on the nature of the human mind. Man is himself a system. Everything he sees around him is a unity of assembled truths. . . . Men differ in the ability to select the best method of presenting a subject. Method arises from a sort of intellectual foresight. The man of method thinks first of that which he executes last. Were you to see an archer preparing his bow, making ready his arrow on the string, taking deliberately his aim, and finally hitting his mark, you would see an emblem of the aim and end of method in a discourse. The speaker has one great impression which he wishes to make, he always keeps his end in view. In his introduction, his figures, his diction, his arguments, and his arrangement of them, he makes everything subservient to his last impression. No matter what his variety may be, if all accumulates on one point and tends to one result. . . .

Method, as Coleridge says, marks the cultivated mind; though native strength will often anticipate it. The best definition of a good method is that of Hooker: "When all that goes before prepares the way for all that follows, and all that follows confirms all that went before." The object of method is to present a compact whole in the best order.

The stereotyped rule for a sermon is first to explain the text; then deduce the doctrine; prove it; answer objections; and make the application.

But, after all, a cryptic method is often the most real and efficacious; where your thoughts, like a genial river, wind naturally, always progressing; and where every bend


* This forms the substance of an article in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. xviii. by the Rev. L. Withington, D.D.

detains you among green fields and waving trees, and leaves the whole landscape impressed on the mind. It is best always to be moving, though not with equal rapidity, to our termination.

There are certain kinds of method suited to various subjects. Doctrinal subjects generally demand a more logical method; but such a strict method formally announced is not suited to lighter subjects. . . . The more feeling, the less method. The force of the order in such cases depends more on particular transition than a studied whole. You go from one sad scene to another by similitude, by contrast, by climax, by relief, or any other principle that seems to suit your intended impression.

The essence of method is *to keep moving to a given point*. The mind here resembles a vessel, which sometimes moves directly with the wind and sometimes when the wind is ahead is obliged to tack, making her long and short reaches according to the occasion, but still keeping the point in view and always gaining on it. Perhaps the most difficult method, and often the best, is to move on a latent line; to put together a string of affiliated truths, where the first prepares the way for the second, and you reach your end by a journey which no one fully sees until it is finished and then every one sees. In such cases you must—1st, be always moving on. not swinging like a door on its hinges; 2nd, you must remember to keep the main point in view; and 3rd, have a reason for your order, though at each step the collocation may not be imperative. Method in such sermons is like a path in the woods: there is a path, though sometimes it is doubtful, and sometimes you find two or three, either of which you may take with equal propriety and success.

Logicians speak of the formal and the cryptic methods. The cryptic is always revealed sufficiently at last. You find it on retrospect; it is but one of those roads whose course you see whenever you have travelled it. This latter method is the most important, and needs the most



cultivation. The stereotyped divisions often tempt us either to needless expansion, or to an indefinite object. This is peculiarly the case when you put the *nature of a thing* as one of the objects: "I shall first show the nature of happiness," or "the nature of sin," or "what law is." Where there is an obscurity, it may sometimes be appropriate to show the nature of an object whose nature is generally mistaken. Thus Cicero begins his first book of *Tusculan Questions* by showing what death is; but he says expressly, "Though it is a thing that seems to be known, yet in its obvious form it produces diversity and confusion." In all such cases remember that nature is above rules, and the end more important than the means. A young aspirant writing on *Time* divided his sermon thus: I. The nature of time. II. The effects of time. One of the hearers whispered, "It was a marvel how he could ever begin the first head, or ever finish the second." Only think—the effects of time! It would take a whole eternity to tell.

The free informal method, being the most difficult and the most exquisite, needs to be studied most. When you seem to abandon order, you impose on yourself the task of a more latent and delicate one. Thus in the fifth book of Cowper's "*Task*" the table of contents is a perfect specimen of the lighter chain:—*A frosty morning—the foddering of cattle—the woodman and his dog, &c.* If you wish to learn this order, and to secure its best form, adopt the following expedients: Cultivate this turn of mind; open the fountains in your soul; read the best specimens—some beautiful ones are found in the Bible, especially the psalms. Consider your subject, and always adopt this method in the subjects that demand it. Be immersed in your theme; find with the psalmist, "while I was musing the fire burned." Keep your end point-blank in view; in many cases surrender yourself to the natural current of your thoughts, though you must review your work in a cooler and more artificial state; let your eye be single, and your whole body will be full of light.

have nature before you—retiring, beautiful nature; none ever worshipped at her shrine over whom she not cast the fragrance of her flowers and the order of arrangement. The great art in method is to make common sense preside over formal rules. A rule is only a general approximation to the truth; and hence a common maxim, *exceptio probat regulam*. When we do nothing by a formal method, let us always forsake it for one which may be more real for not being so. Let us always sacrifice the substance to the

is sometimes the case that the most consecutive arguments are induced to adopt an order which seems very odd and strange until we see the reason of it. If a man could look out of a window on the sea, and observe a vessel aiming at the river's mouth with a head wind, he would consider her motions erratic and strange while she was tacking, provided he did not know which way the wind was. In like manner many authors have a latent reason for an incoherent method, unaccountable until explained. Paul himself was an example. He had a methodical mind, that is, moving on a mental line marked by perpetual divergences. He was methodical, just as a man is methodical and all that class of men, wavering, but with a centre to which they perpetually return, and sometimes with an assumption which the subject does suggest. Thus the Second Epistle to the Corinthians appears on the first perusal to be a jumble of unconnected ideas; it resembles one of those apple-trees which bears russets on the north side, pearmaines on the west, or sweetings on the south, and the baldwins on the east, all growing from one root, and hanging in rich profusion. We wonder at the phenomenon until we see the cause, that the Corinthians had submitted to postulate a series of questions which he was bound to answer. In like manner I can imagine a preacher to be addressing his people, perhaps in a far-distant discourse, on whom the topics are forced by the

occasion; and his method by those on the spot (interpreted by the silent conditions existing in each of their minds) may seem perfectly natural; yet when those silent conditions have evaporated into a new state of things, his order in the discourse may seem abrupt, arbitrary, and inconsequential. The best method often, like the tallest tree, grows up from a root the deepest hidden in the ground.

FAITH is the very germ of the Divine salvation, and its value is as a germ. Not only does it fail of answering its proper end, if it is not growing and adding to itself, but it is an abiding falsehood, a mockery. Its chief characteristic is that it can grow; and the truly Christian man is constantly advancing from the lower to the higher, from the simpler to the more profound, from the seed to the blade, to the ear, to the full corn in the ear. . . . "Add to your faith." The force of the words is rather "Provide in your faith," let your faith be inclusive of all the virtues. As the acorn contains the future oak,—all the leaves, branches, twigs wrapped up in the secret chambers of the tiny seed,—so in the faith there must be the force and embryo of all excellence. As circumstances demand by the external stimulus of the Divine Spirit, these varied excellencies of the holy life spring forth.

Take it another way. We are to furnish or manifest in our faith virtue, and in our virtue temperance, and so on; that is, in the exercise of each excellency the succeeding one is to be exhibited. The order is not of time, but of thought. Our faith is to be a virtuous faith; our virtue a wise discriminating virtue; our knowledge a practical knowledge, producing self-restraint; our self-restraint or temperance a patient submission; our patience a religious, godly patience; our godliness a loving sympathetic godliness; our brotherly love a wide, benevolent charity.—"*The Beauties of Holiness*," by Rev. P. W. DARTON.

Journeying Homeward.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM BELL, M.A., PORT GLASGOW.

“And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses’ father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you ; come thou with us, and we will do thee good ; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.”—NUM. x. 29.

THE Israelites have sojourned for nearly a year in the wilderness of Sinai, therefore near the dwelling-place of Jethro or Raguel, the father-in-law of Moses. Hobab, the son of Raguel, and the brother-in-law of Moses, has thus been with or near the Israelites for a considerable time. They are now, however, to resume their journey ; the moving of the pillar of cloud is a signal for their march. Hobab therefore cannot stay at home, and *also* be with the chosen people. He must choose. Moses urges him to give up his country and his father’s house, and come along with them ; and he promises to him a share of the blessing.

The double study of the Pentateuch, 1st as history, 2nd as a system of types.—In the latter aspect, the history of the children of Israel is typical of the life of every saint of God, the biography of every Christian “writ large.” The serfdom of Egypt represents the bondage of sin ; the passage of the Red Sea, conversion ; the wilderness journey, the earthly life of a Christian after conversion ; the passage of the Jordan, death ; the entrance into Canaan, the saint’s admission into heaven.

The text, viewed in this light, suggests—

I. WE ARE ALL TRAVELLERS. This is not our home. “We are journeying.”

This was evident in the case of the children of Israel. Everything about *them*, all the circumstances in which they were placed, reminded them that they were travellers.

1. *The country was unsuited for living in.* Egypt was

in their estimation better than it, even with the bondage, certainly when looked at simply as a place to live in. If no hereafter, better the life of the world, with its unconcern and careless ease, than the life of the Christian, with its painful self-denials, its self-mortifyings, its daily self-crucifying, its many doubts and anxious fears. True, the Christian even here has a greater and deeper joy than the worldling (Ps. iv. 7; John xiv. 27); but it is anticipated from the future, it is the "earnest of our inheritance." Their chief supplies came from above—manna, water. Our food does not grow in the desert; it is sent to us from the home to which we are journeying.

2. *They had only tents to dwell in.* "The earthly house of this tabernacle."

3. *Everything that befel them had reference mainly to their future home.* The route they took, e. g. when they turned down into the wilderness of Sinai, the trials and difficulties and oppositions they met with, were preparations for receiving and enjoying Canaan. Sinai's laws were for Canaan, not for the wilderness: the oft-repeated "when thou comest into the land." God's dealings with us, here and now, have reference, not to this world but to the next. *This world very unequally divided: men of whom the world is not worthy dwelling in hovels and garrets; men who are unworthy of the world, in palaces.*

A happy journey; God for their Friend, Provider, Guardian, Guide. "Happy art thou, O Israel;" might have been *perfectly* happy, but for their own folly.

II. THE END OF THE JOURNEY IS A "GOOD" LAND WHICH THE LORD HAS PROMISED.

1. *He has told them of it;* has promised to give it to them; is taking them to it. No mere traveller's tales. It is true there is such a land; for He "who cannot lie" has said so. They are not taking this long journey to try to find it out for themselves; He who knows the way is leading them. Of themselves, they might not be

able to make their way to it—difficulties of country, enemies—or to take possession of it when found and reached. The All-sufficient, the All-mighty, is their protector as well as their guide. Read what Balaam says on that point, Num. xxiii. 18-24.

Atheist, in Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," "fell into a very great laughter" when Christian and Hopeful told him they were "going to Mount Zion." "I laugh," he said, "to see what ignorant persons you are, to take upon you so tedious a journey; you are like to have nothing but your travel for your pains, for there is no such place as you dream of in all this world." "There is in the world to come," answered Christian; "we have both heard and believe that there is such a place to be found." "In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you." "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

"Jesus, my Lord, I know His name,
His name is all my boast;
Nor will He put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost."

2. *A good land*—no sorrow, no anxiety, no sin. "There rests not on that smooth brow, there lingers not in these serene features, a furrow, or line, or shade of former sadness, languor, or suffering;—not a trace of wishes unfulfilled, of fond hopes blighted. The desert is passed," the river is crossed, the home is reached, and the soul rests securely on the bosom of its Saviour.

III. OUR GREAT OBJECT IN LIFE SHOULD BE TO GET THERE.

1. *To be getting every day nearer.* In one sense we are getting nearer home; *time* is carrying us towards it. But are we getting spiritually nearer? Are we fitter for it? The Israelites had to turn back, when they got to the borders of Canaan.

2. *Not to think too much of the inconveniences or the pleasures we meet with on our journey.* It would have been sad to have had to stay always beside Marah's bitter waters; it mattered little, when they were only passing them. It would not have done to have stayed at Elim to enjoy its sweetness: there was a sweeter sweetness before them; and Elim would only have kept them from it. It was a blessing by the way, for travellers to use: if they had made more of it, it would have been a temptation and a curse. "This is not your rest." "If they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is an heavenly." The bird that built its nest on a tree marked to be cut down; Mohammed before Damascus; "Man but one paradise, and mine is above."

"The thorn and the thistle around me may grow,
I would not lie down o'en on roses below;
I ask not a portion, I seek not a rest,
Till I find them for ever on Jesu's kind breast."

IV. WE SHOULD ENDEAVOUR TO PERSUADE OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS TO COME ALONG WITH US.

Paul—"My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Andrew to Peter—"We have found the Messias." Philip to Nathanael—"We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

We lose none of the blessing by sharing it; we gain. The man in the parable, who found the hid treasure, hid it again, until he could lawfully secure it; he needed it all for himself. This treasure is an inexhaustible gold field. The four lepers who went, as the least of three evils, to Benhadad's camp, and found it empty, who "did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment," found that there was vastly more than *they* had any use for. And they said one to another, "We do not well;

this is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace.”
 “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever.”

“We will do thee good:” (1) Good on the journey. “Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” (2) Good at last. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

Concluding remarks.—We are *all* journeying, whether we will or not. The earth is whirling through space, at the rate of 19 miles per second, and carrying us round by the revolution of its axis at an equally prodigious rate. Together, until the river; two lands beyond it. Together, until death, by bodily contact; separating day by day in spiritual affinity. A heavenward or a hell-ward journey. Which way are you travelling? If to heaven, say to others—to your friends and neighbours, “Come thou with us.” If to hell, hear the invitation, “Come.” Choose the right road *now, to-day*, lest to-morrow the impassable gulf be fixed between the two.

Outlines.

Man Addressing God.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”
 —Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.

I. MAN REQUESTING DIVINE SCRUTINY. God has spoken to men; men speak to God. Man holding intercourse with God is man in a glorious attitude. 1. *Reverence manifested*: “O God.” Not the cry of alarm, or a meaningless utterance. The petitioner realized God’s presence, and his soul was filled with awe. 2. *Thorough*

investigation invoked : "Search me, and know my heart." Not that God was to thus obtain information unknown to Him before ; but the asker, penetrated with a sense of sinfulness, desires God to search his heart, that the heart—with all its tendencies, passions, evils—may become known to himself through God's inquest. This is not an agreeable prayer to every man : God's perfect knowledge of the human heart is a repulsive thought to many ; it takes the pleasure out of sinful indulgence ; it is the grim skull at the merry feast. Such aversion reveals (a) ignorance of God's character, (b) a soul out of harmony with God, (c) the want of reconciliation, (d) internal misery.

II. MAN DESIRING DIVINE DISCIPLINE. 1. *Severe testing* : "Try me." God is willing to be put to the test. "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts," etc. "O taste and see that the Lord is good." But God tries man. "God did tempt Abraham." "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man." God tries by affliction, tests by disappointment, proves by desertion. Hezekiah—"God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." It is God's prerogative to prove the heart of man ; "I, the Lord, search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doing." 2. *Moral discrimination* : "And know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me." "Thoughts"—this includes desires, undeveloped intentions, unfulfilled hopes. "Any wicked way"—any way of pain or grief, habitual feelings, cherished purposes, modes of acting,—any cause that offends Thee. God discriminates. "The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed." He estimates aright the quality, and, in the "balances of the sanctuary," weighs the worth of all human deeds. He anatomises all actions : "All things are naked and opened," etc. ; "Thou hast set our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." Examine me, prove me, let me know my moral state. We test things to ascertain their worth,—a chain, that its strength may

be known and its defective links discovered ; a vessel goes a trial trip, etc. Now God will try you whether you ask Him or not. Better put yourself into His hands ; better let Him reveal your "wicked way," that you may obtain pardon and succour. Remember the announcement, "Let the wicked forsake his way," etc. Bethink thee of the gracious consolation : "In that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

III. MAN IMPLORING DIVINE LEADERSHIP. 1. *Spiritual ignorance confessed* : "Lead me." Man has not sufficiency of wisdom to dispense with the guidance of God. Spiritual ignorance caused by the blinding influences of sin ; by the craft of Satan ; by the deceits of example and custom ; by the want of consideration. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but," etc. In direct contact with the majesty of the Almighty, man sinks to the earth, saying, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." God flashes the light of His law upon an impure heart : "Who can understand his errors ? cleanse thou me from secret faults." *Lead me, O God, for I am ignorant of myself, of my infirmities, of my power of resistance, of the difficulties before me, of the strength and subtlety of mine enemies.* 2. *Divine condescension besought* : "Lead me." It is not presuming upon God to ask this : "I will guide thee with mine eye" ; "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me" ; "The Lord is my shepherd, he leadeth me" ; "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." 3. *Perpetual guidance implored* : "Lead me in the way everlasting." The true path the way of holiness, the course of safety the way that shall last for ever.

Theddingworth.

M. BRAITHWAITE.

Man as a Worshipper.

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings?" etc.—*Psalm* x. 1-2.

In these verses there is an inquiry and a response. Look at—

I. *Man as a worshipper.* His tendency to seek or make a God. The testimony of heathenism. The weakness and folly of man, as seen in all forms of perverted worship (Paul's speech on Mars' hill); yet all altars have the inscription, "I believe in God." Utter atheism can never become universal.

II. *Man, as a worshipper, seeking to propitiate God.* How shall I appease God? Shall I bring costly gifts? Enumerate the offerings here projected—beasts, oil, man's own offspring. These show—(1) the awfulness of human sin; and (2) the need of atonement. All man's sacrifices are inadequate. God provides for man's need: "Once in the end of the world hath Christ appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"; "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

III. *Man, as a worshipper, receiving Divine direction.* "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" 1. Right moral action: "to do justly." 2. Right moral feeling: "to love mercy." 3. Right companionship: "to walk humbly with thy God."

Conclusion: the glory of true worship, as revealed by Christ. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Theddingworth.

M. B.

Relative Truths.

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access," etc.—*Rom.* v. 1, 2.

I. THAT we are justified before God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. II. That peace with God results

from justification by faith. III. That through Christ we are admitted to an abiding state of favour. IV. That this gracious condition begets joyous anticipations of future glory.

Theddingworth.

M. B.

Christian Service.

“What do ye more than others?”—MATT. v. 47.

THERE is frequently something very suggestive, very searching, and very awakening about a well timed and wisely put question. It would be a good thing for us often honestly and closely to question ourselves, and it would sometimes be still more profitable to submit to the questioning of others, as they would be far more likely to put the needful and the character-revealing questions than we should.

The text is a question put by the great Searcher of hearts, eighteen centuries ago, to His immediate disciples and a company of professedly religious Jews. The question is still being put by Him to all His professed disciples, and to ourselves among the number; it therefore behoves us thoughtfully and devoutly to consider it.

I. *The question is suggestive of duty.* It implies that Christians *ought* to do more in this world than others. We may ask,—

For whom?—*For themselves*, in the way of cultivating a more noble, consistent, and Christ-like character. *For their families*, in the way of leading them to Christ and training them for God and for heaven. *For their immediate neighbourhood, their country, and the world*: in the way of propagating truth, lessening sorrow, preventing sin, and extending the kingdom of Christ.

By what means?—By the Christian use of their tongues, their hands, their pens, and their purses.

For what reasons?—Because they (1) know more than others; (2) have received more than others; (3)

enjoy more than others; (4) profess more than others; (5) expect more than others; and (6) are responsible for more than others.

II. *The question implies doubt.* It seems to suggest that all professors of religion are *not* doing more than some non-professors. Neither are they *we* fear. Some are distinguished for their devotedness to the cause of humanity and Christ; they talk, they write, they work, and they give most nobly; they are the lights of the world, and the salt of the earth; men take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus and have learnt of Him, and by them are led to glorify our Father in heaven. But this is not true of all: some professors of religion are not only doing much less than they ought, but positively much less than some who make no profession at all.

Brethren, what do *ye* more than *others*? Ask yourselves, in the presence of the Master's eye. Are you doing your best? Then be not weary in well-doing, for in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not.

Are you neglecting your duty? Seek pardon for the past; consecrate yourselves to future and noble service.
Blackburn. JOHN MORGAN.

The Multitude in Adoration.

MATTHEW xxi. 8, 9.

I. *A multitude attracted by marvellous intelligence.* The raising of Lazarus (John xii. 1-18). Men are now attracted by the intelligence of One who raises from the dead (Eph. ii. 1). Yet curiosity or some other motive attracts, rather than a desire to be made to share in spiritual blessings.

II. *A multitude following the example of a few.* From Luke xix. 37 it appears that "the multitude of the disciples began," etc. These, although called a "multitude," must have been few compared with the crowds which

went before and followed after. The sincere worshippers of Christ are few; multitudes join them in their public worship who have no real interest in the scene.

III. *A multitude rendering regal honours to the Son of a carpenter.* Spreading garments on the ground a mode of rendering homage to kings (2 Kings ix. 13). Those who worship Christ have discovered that He is more than human. If He be the Son of Mary, He is also the Son of God (1 John v. 5).

IV. *A multitude looking for material aggrandisement.* They sought a king who should re-establish the independence of Israel. How many profess Christ for the sake of worldly gain!

V. *A multitude who in a little while exchanged the cry of "Hosanna" for that of "Crucify him."* Professing Christians by their conduct cry "Crucify him," when they conform to the world; when they trust in their own righteousness rather than in the blood of Christ; when they are ashamed of the name of Christ.

Dawlish.

F. WAGSTAFF.

Rough Notes for Extempore Preaching.

Christian Lights.

"Ye shine [*or rather, Shine ye*] as lights in the world."—PHIL. ii. 15.

WE have all felt the contagious influence of example. We catch somewhat of the spirit of those with whom we associate. This should teach us on the one hand to be careful in choosing the companions with whom we associate, of seeing that they be pure, high toned, and spiritually minded; and on the other hand, the importance of exerting, as far as in us lies, an influence for good in the circle within which we move. The good ought to make their influence to be as powerfully felt as the bad. If they fail in this they fail in the chief purpose for which

they were placed in society. If the salt loses its strength, and power to preserve, it loses its value, it is good for nothing, but is thrown out as refuse.

The world is in a state of darkness, i.e. a state of ignorance, error, and sin. The present is the world's night; it has to be illuminated by lamps. Many portions of it are in thick darkness, and the most favoured portions have but the light of the early grey dawn, or as when the moon is shedding her silver beams upon the earth. Much of what is vauntingly spoken of as light is nothing better than twilight or moonlight. As with such imperfect light there is need of the lamp to shed its light in our rooms, so even in this land of so called light there is still need of the true Christian's light to enable men to read God's character aright, and to do wisely and well God's work. The day is coming when the Sun of Righteousness will fill the earth with His light. Then there will be no need of the Christian's lamp. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord," etc.

How may we shine best as lights in the world?

I. The first thing necessary to shining as lights is that *we have in our hearts God's love and truth.* God's love and truth in the heart are the oil and wick to the lamp. The Christian's light is a borrowed light. He himself was once dark, ignorant, depraved, unhappy, even as others; but through the knowledge and belief of the truth he has become light in the Lord, and shines by that borrowed light. The light of the lamp and all artificial lights are borrowed from the light of the sun. The oil, from whatever quarter it comes, has derived its light giving power originally from the sun. If it be extracted from the tree, it was the sun, the sun's light and heat, that brought that tree into life. If it well forth from the earth, as is the case with much of the oil in use, it flows from what was once a growing forest. The gas we daily use owes in the same way its light giving power

to the sun; the coals from which it is made are the remains of waving forests. Or if it be animal fat, still it is derived from the sun, the pasturage, etc. And in like manner the light which shines from the Christian is derived from Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. Our life grows out of the life of Christ; whatever is good and influences others for good is due to Him. "By the grace of God I am what I am." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." In order to win others to the truth, we must be ourselves subject to the truth; in order to show Christ's character, we must have His spirit and His love, "be harmless and sincere, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation." Without this we cannot shine as lights in the world.

II. The direction of the apostle implies there should be *no concealment of the light*. "Shine ye;" the Lord Himself gives expression to this still more forcibly—"Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under a bushel, but on a lamp-stand. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works." The Christian is to make it plain that he is a disciple of Christ—by profession, by confession in trying circumstance, before unchristian associates. John Angel James traced his conversion to such a confession of Christ, on the part of one of the apprentices at Poole, who kneeled down in prayer before retiring to rest.

III. To shine well, there should be the *reflector*. The Christian reflector is a *blameless life*, "that ye be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke;" or, as our Lord expresses it, *good works*, "that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." What powerful reflectors to the Christian light are a blameless character and good works! They give effect to the profession, weight to every entreaty, and to every word spoken.

IV. The lamp, to shine steadily and continuously, should be *frequently trimmed and fed*. A lamp will not continue to burn long without fresh feeding with oil. When the oil is exhausted the light flickers for a little before extinction. Prayer is the oil for the Christian lamp. Without prayer the light becomes dim. Mere profession is like the oilless wick with a flickering flame, ever on the point of being extinguished. However full the Christian may be of love and zeal, if he is to continue so, his soul must oft be fed with fresh oil at the Fountain of all grace and strength. He must often go to the foot of the cross, and to the mercy-seat, that the flickering flame of his first love be kindled anew.

Many a Christian lamp, that gave light to those who sat in darkness, through neglect of prayer has become dim; many a lamp, that once shone brightly in a dark place, through want of oil has become darkness.

D. LONGWILL.

Reviews.

WORDS OF COMFORT FOR PARENTS BEREAVED OF LITTLE CHILDREN. Edited by WM. LOGAN. *Jas. Nisbet.*

REUNION OF CHRISTIAN FRIENDS AND THEIR INFANT CHILDREN IN THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM. By WM. ANDERSON, LL.D. *Wm. Oliphant & Co.*

THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING, AND OTHER DISCOURSES. By E. DE PRESSENSE, D.D. *Hodder & Stoughton.*

In no department of pastoral duty does the preacher meet with greater encouragement than in that of visitation of the afflicted. In many cases where from the pulpit the preacher has sought in vain a response to his message, he has found prepared hearts and submissive wills by the bedside of the afflicted, and in the scene of sorrow and bereavement. One of the strongest ties uniting together pastor and people is the recollection of such seasons of intercourse. In order to be a true comforter in sorrow, the preacher must himself feel

the consolation of the gospel. Without sympathy with the truth as well as with the sufferer, he fails to heal the wounded spirit or bind up the broken heart. But to be conversant also with the thoughts and experience of others on the subject of affliction confirms his own impressions respecting the gracious purposes intended by it, as well as enriches the expression when endeavouring to impart consolation to others. The three books whose titles we place above all deal with the subject of affliction, but in very different ways.

(1) The first is one that has been long and highly appreciated by the public. The "Words of Comfort" have special reference to those who are bereaved of their children. The plan of the volume is good. The best sayings on the subject of infant salvation, and the most consolatory words to those who are bereaved of their children, are culled from all quarters, from the realms of poetry as well as prose. With the extracts from published books are inserted many short original papers by living authors. The book has necessarily a fragmentary character; but this perhaps will be considered no objection by those for whom it was designed, as the mind when plunged in sorrow is often unable to follow what requires sustained and consecutive thought.

(2) The second is a little volume peculiarly interesting from the circumstance that called it forth, "the death of his young and latterly only remaining son." To a powerful discourse, written when the eminent author was in the full vigour of manhood, is prefixed an address in the form of a letter, full of touching reminiscences of his departed child.

(3) In the third we have a consecutive and philosophical exposition of the mystery of suffering. This forms half of the volume, and is well known to our readers, having appeared in the *Pulpit Analyst*. The second half of the volume, which appears for the first time in an English garb, consists of sermons on various subjects, such as "Christian Mysticism," "The Sins of Religious Speech," "The Adoration of Mary the Sister of Lazarus," etc., and are treated with M. De Pressensé's peculiar power and beauty.

CONGREGATIONALISM IN YORKSHIRE. By JAMES G. MIALL.
J. Snow & Co.

Much of the sectarian feeling existing in society arises from Christians of different denominations not knowing one an-

other. It has been often remarked, that if Christians knew one another better there would be more confidence in each other. Such volumes as the above do good service in furnishing material for our becoming better acquainted with our fellow-Christians. Mr. J. G. Miall is a thorough Congregationalist, or he had not been fitted to write this history; but he has large sympathies with all that is truly Christian. Although this volume treats chiefly on what has special reference to Yorkshire, it treats also of much that is interesting to the country at large. The rise and development of Dissent, the labours and the sufferings of the "outcast" Nonconformists are well handled. Many of the sufferers for conscience sake, briefly noticed in this volume, are well worthy of having their names preserved in history. The history of Yorkshire Nonconformity was projected by the late Rev. Thomas Scales, of Leeds; but "the pressure of public engagements prevented him from building his detached fragments into a perfect whole:" a few sentences only of the intended work were composed by the originator. The volume in the main is the work of Mr. Miall. It has in every way been well executed. The author shows himself to be eminently qualified for the office of historian. Throughout the volume we have proofs of his sound judgment and judicial calmness, while his style is vigorous and pure, and never wants the dignity that belongs to the true historian. The "Synoptical History of the Yorkshire Churches" appended to the volume, although brief, is complete, and must be invaluable to all who take an interest in Congregationalism in Yorkshire.

THE BEAUTIES OF HOLINESS. Seven Sermons by the Rev. P. W. DARTON. *Elliot Stock.*

This is a little book, fresh and vigorous in thought, and perfect in composition. The apology for publication is straightforward and manly. "To wish to scatter one's thoughts among men for their stimulus or comfort is a natural and not unworthy desire. The pulpit offers but a narrow field in these days of wide sympathies and great mental activity; and it is not, I hope, an ignoble ambition to wish for a wider influence than the pulpit of a provincial town affords." In page 644 we give a specimen of the author's style.

¹³ And they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, that they might ensnare Him in discourse.

Sec. II
Reply to
Pharisees
and He-
rodians.

The wicked expect to profit by the removal of the righteous.

What is good passes from those who will not use it to those who will.

Those most honoured by God have not been most honoured by men.

SEC. III. (Mark xii. 13-17; Matt. xxii. 15-22; Luke xx. 20-26.) The priests, having failed to injure Jesus through His opposition to their own authority, sought to draw Him into collision with the Roman government. The Pharisees and Herodians were already allied in hostile purposes, and some of them were employed to propose, with the pretence of respect, a dangerous question. It was expected that the Messiah would free the Jews from the rule of foreigners, and therefore not sanction that rule by the payment of tribute. In the temple the question was asked, if the heathen government was thus to be supported? A negative reply would be a capital offence against the Roman emperor; a simple affirmative would greatly offend the Jewish people. Instead of a direct answer, Jesus, knowing their duplicity, asked for the current coin. This was a clear proof that Cæsar was then the supreme political authority in the land; as such he was acknowledged, and taxes were therefore due to his government. What was due to Cæsar might be paid; and, at the same time, what was due to God. The Divine government and the human were not opposed, as the questioners imagined. They might be in opposition, and then it was a duty to obey God rather than man. But they might be, and generally were, in accordance; and then submission to the Divine government required submission to the human. According to the views of the Jews, the subjects of the Messiah could not be the subjects of Cæsar. The answer of Jesus declared that there was no such contrariety. The respective provinces of the two governments were distinct. Taxes were not among the things which, belonging only to the Divine government, should be paid to God only. The things of Cæsar are chiefly outward, and may be taken by force; the things of God are chiefly inward, and must be given freely. There was no probability that a better government could, by violence, be substituted for the Roman; it was therefore the duty of the Jews to submit to that foreign rule, having become subject to it through their sins and the sins of their

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¹⁴ Then they coming say to Him, Teacher, we know that Thou art truthful, and art not careful about any one; for Thou dost not look to the countenance of men, but teachest truthfully the way of God. Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Should we give, or not give?

¹⁵ But He knowing their dissimulation, said to them, Why are you proving Me? Bring Me a denarius that I may see it. ¹⁶ Then they brought it. And He said to them, Whose is this likeness and the inscription? Then they said to Him, Cæsar's. ¹⁷ And in reply Jesus said to them, Render what is Cæsar's to Cæsar; and what is God's to God. And they wondered at Him.

forefathers. There is nothing in this decision to forbid the attempts of a people to improve their government, or to cast off a foreign yoke, when such attempts would probably be successful and beneficial.

¹² The Pharisees, the most strict of the Jewish sects, would take one side in this controversy; and the Herodians, the supporters of Herod and of the Roman authority, would take the other.

¹⁴ St. Luke describes them as pretending to be upright men, and as purposing to deliver Him to the governor.

¹⁵ The denarius was a Roman coin of silver, less than a shilling in value, and the usual payment for a day's labour. It bore the head and title of the emperor.

¹⁶ This is not an *argumentum ad hominem*; nor are there any examples of such reasoning in the discourses of Jesus. As they were receiving the benefits of the Roman government, it was but just that they should pay the taxes. All the coin of the country was not claimed.

¹⁷ The principle declared included an answer to the question proposed. In reply to the question of Pilate, Jesus asserted that He was a king, but that His kingdom was not of this world (John xviii. 36). In the statement of political duties St. Paul makes the duty of submission to magistrates the consequence of submission to the supreme governor; and refers to the services which rulers render to society, as the reason for the payment which is made to them (Rom. xiii. 6).

The best truths may be declared with the worst intentions.

¹⁸ And the Sadducees came to Him, who say that there is no resurrection; and they questioned Him, say- Sec
Reply
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All governments have their services, and consequently their dues.

No earthly governments can prevent the spiritual service of God.

That should not be rendered to them which is due to God only.

SEC. IV. (Mark xii. 18-27; Matt. xxii. 23-33; Luke xx. 27-40.) The enemies of Jesus were the first to propose their questions; and when they were foiled others came forward, influenced by curiosity, and seeking to maintain the opinions of their party. The Sadducees, who, from teaching that virtue should not be pursued for the sake of future reward, had come to deny that there were any rewards beyond the present life, proposed their question. They argued that there was not another life, because no satisfactory answer could be given to some questions respecting it. Jesus, in replying to their question, told them that they were in error, and traced this to two causes. First, they wrongly assumed that the Divine power was limited to the production of a life such as men now possessed. And secondly, they disregarded the testimony of Scripture, which, speaking of the relation of the departed to God, showed plainly that they were still alive and had not perished. The existence of the mind apart from any material frame, and the future resurrection of the decayed body, were not taught in the Old Testament, nor commonly believed by the Jews. The resurrection, or uprising, which they hoped for, was of the persons; and the life which they expected would follow death, was not deferred to the distant future. Jesus does not speak here of the resurrection of dead bodies, but of the restoration of men from the state of death. The testimony of Scripture which is adduced has no reference to the raising up of bodies from their graves; but it does declare the new life which is continued with God, when the natural life has disappeared from men. Such a life was denied by the Sadducees (Acts xxiii. 8), and was proved by the words of God. St. Paul says that the body which is sown is not raised, but that another comes from it (1 Cor. xv. 36). As the *sowing* of which he speaks precedes the *dying*, it must be the birth into this world which precedes death, and not the burial in the earth which follows. He taught that we have a heavenly habitation immediately, when the earthly tent is taken down; and that we have immortal garments at once, when

ing, ¹⁹Teacher, Moses wrote for us, that if the brother of any man die, and leave behind a wife, and leave not children, his brother should take his wife, and raise up offspring to his brother. ²⁰There were seven brethren; and the first took a wife, and dying left no offspring. ²¹And the second took her, and died, nor did he leave offspring. And the third likewise. ²²And the seven took her, and left no offspring. Last of all the woman also died. ²³In the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife of them will she be? For the seven had her as wife.

²⁴And Jesus in reply said to them, Are you not on this account in error, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God? ²⁵For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as angels who are in heaven.

²⁶But respecting the dead,—that they are raised,—have you not read in the book of Moses, at the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, *I am the God of Abraham,*

the mortal are laid aside. They who are unclothed are not found naked (2 Cor. v. 3).

¹⁹ The law is in Dent. xxv. 5.

²⁰ This question was one of the puzzles of the Jewish schools, to which different replies were given, some saying of the first, and some of the last.

²⁵ St. Luke gives the contrast between the sons of this age and they who are deemed worthy of the future; and the statement respecting the latter, that they cannot die, being as angels, and sons of God.

²⁶ The narrative is in Exod. iii. 6, and the reference is to a section of the book (Luke xi. 37). The verb in the present tense is given by St. Matthew, and it is implied in the original and in translations. The argument in the Epistle to the Hebrews is different from this. There it is inferred, from the words spoken to the patriarchs in their earthly life, that some better portion was provided for them. Here, from similar words spoken after their death, it is inferred that they were still alive (Heb. xi. 16).

and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? ²⁷ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You therefore are much in error.

Div. III. *Didactic Discourses.* (XII. 28-44.)

²⁸ And one of the scribes coming forward, having ^{Sec.} heard them disputing, perceiving that He answered ^{The Ch} ^{Comma}

²⁷ St. Luke gives in addition the declaration "for all are alive to Him." He also states that some of the scribes commended the answer of Jesus, and that with this the hostile questioning came to an end. St. Matthew says that the people were astonished at His teaching.

God is able to preserve old forms of life and to produce new.

Marriage, birth, and death, belong only to the earthly life.

The mission of Moses was confirmed by the testimony of Christ.

They who are now dead to men still live with God.

Div. III. (Chap. xii. 28-44.) The controversial colloquies were followed by other discourses; and, of these four are now related, of the highest didactic importance. Three of these are given by St. Matthew, and two by St. Luke; other discourses are related by St. John.

Sec. I. (Mark. xii. 28-34; Matt. xxii. 34-40.) A scribe, who was a Pharisee and a teacher of the law, but not one of the enemies of Jesus, inquired, for his own instruction and that of the people, which was the greatest of the commandments. In reply Jesus referred, not to any particular precept or prohibition, but to two comprehensive statements respecting the dispositions and habits which men should cultivate,—the supreme love of God, and the love of others as of themselves. When the questioner acknowledged that these were better than all outward religious services, he was commended for his spiritual discernment, and told that he was near to the kingdom of God. The law of Moses was in part like other laws: it contained rules of *action*, delivered by authority, and supported by

them well, questioned Him, Which is the first commandment of all? ²⁸ Then Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, *Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God; the Lord alone.* ²⁹ *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy will, and with all thy strength.* This is the first commandment. ³¹ And a second is like,—this. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* There is not another commandment greater than these.

³² And the scribe said to Him, Well, Teacher, Thou

rewards and penalties, which were connected with conduct, irrespective of character; the man who did them lived and prospered by them. But besides these rules it had directions referring to the dispositions of the mind, which are not within the province of ordinary laws, not admitting of definition and enforcement; and these are of the highest moment. The question respecting the comparative value of the commands was much discussed among the Jews, and generally with a reference to the first class of commands, those concerning actions. Jesus passes over these, and selects two of the second class, respecting dispositions.

²⁸ St. Matthew says the questioner was one of the Pharisees who came to Jesus after the colloquy with the Sadducees, but does not describe him as an opponent. The term applied to his inquiry, *proving*, does not indicate hostility; it is used for the best purposes, or for the worst. The nature of the question shows that the intention was good, and this is confirmed by the commendation which follows.

²⁹ The quotation is from Deut. vi. 4, 5; St. Matthew does not give the declaration which precedes the command. The term Lord is here used as a proper name, and cannot be combined with numerals as a general noun. The Hebrew is simply,—Jehovah our God, Jehovah one. There are two propositions, the numeral being used adverbially, as in Zech. xiv. 9.

³⁰ The *heart* figuratively represents the mind as knowing. The three terms in the Hebrew text refer to the chief manifestations of mind, intelligence, sensibility, and energy.

³¹ This quotation is from Lev. xix. 18. Instead of the comment here given, St. Matthew has a statement of the dependence, on these two principles, of all the precepts of the law and the prophets.

³² The reply of the scribe, and the commendation he received, are

hast spoken truly, for there is One, and there is no other beside Him. ²³ And to love Him with all the mind, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength; and to love his neighbour as himself;—is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. ²⁴ And Jesus seeing him, that he answered wisely, said to him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no one ventured to question Him any more.

²⁵ And Jesus in conversation said, teaching in the temple, How do the Scribes declare that the Christ is David. Sno.
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David.

mentioned only here. St. Luke does not relate this conversation, having before given a conversation in which, by another lawyer, these two commands were given as the principles of the whole law (x. 27). He places after the controversial discourses a statement, similar to that here made, of the cessation of captious questions. Evidently to these St. Mark refers, though he has reserved the statement till the last inquiry, which was of a different character. By St. Matthew a similar statement is made after the next conversation.

There is but one God, who is to be supremely loved and honoured.

Men should regard the good of others with desire and delight, even as their own.

Sno. II. (Mark xii. 35–37; Matt. xxii. 41–46; Luke xx. 41–44.) After replying to various questions, Jesus proposed a question to some of the Pharisees and scribes, who remained with the multitude when the opponents had gone away. On their answer He raised an important inquiry, not as a critical puzzle, nor as a means of exposing incompetency; but to remind of the Divine appointment, through which the fulfilment of law would be secured; and to direct attention to the indications which O. T. prophecy afforded, of the real character of the kingdom of Messiah. If it had been, as was commonly supposed, an earthly kingdom, the son of David could not also be the Lord of David. But this was declared by David, and was taught him by the Spirit of God. The Anointed King, whom David described as his

David's son? ³⁶ For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, "*The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make thy adversaries a footstool for thy feet.*" ³⁷ David himself then called Him Lord; and whence is He his son? And a great multitude were hearing Him gladly.

Lord, was one whose kingdom belonged to all ages and nations of mankind, and must therefore be spiritual and Divine. The King, who was David's Lord and Saviour, was also to be an everlasting Priest, by whom the fulfilment of the law of love and righteousness would be secured. Such Jesus declared Himself to be. Standing in the temple, surrounded by a few followers who but partially understood Him, alone anticipating the coming events, He expressed the assurance that, as the Son of God, He should sit at the right hand of the Father, and that all which was in opposition would be made subject to Him. (Rom. i. 4.)

³⁸ The question here given was preceded, according to St. Matthew, by a question addressed to Pharisees, What do you think respecting the Christ? Of whom is He the Son? They said to Him—Of David. And so the following inquiry is given, as addressed to them.

³⁹ Psalm cx. also foretells the great *number* of people, of *many* nations, who, adorned with true *holiness*, would become the *willing* subjects of Messiah's kingdom. It then declares that this Divine purpose would be realized by a new priesthood,—a priesthood of *character*, and not of *ceremonies*. And lastly it indicates, that the opposition of earthly kingdoms would be overcome, and the new kingdom be established, by the temporary humiliation of Him whose kingdom and priesthood were peculiar, universal, and everlasting. The use here made of this psalm proves that it was regarded by all as unquestionably the prediction of David. Such a traditional testimony, apart from the authority of Christ, would be more trustworthy than modern conjectures, founded on the supposed superior suitableness of the composition to another writer. The military expressions of the psalm should be taken figuratively, for it teaches that, as the priesthood of Messiah differs from the Levitical, so does His kingdom from the kingdoms of the earth. All the evangelists state that Jesus reasoned from the declaration, as the prophecy of David. St. Matthew also says, that David spoke influenced by the Spirit; by St. Luke the quotation is given as from the Book of Psalms.

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³⁸ And He said to them in His teaching, Beware of the scribes, who like walking about in robes, and greetings in the broad ways, ³⁹ and first seats in the synagogues, and first couches in the banquets; ⁴⁰ who eat up the houses of widows, and in pretence make long prayers. These will receive a heavier sentence.

Sec. I
Caution
against
Scribes.

David, moved by the Spirit of God, foretold that a son of his would rule over all, and acknowledged Him as his Lord.

Jesus declared that He was this Son, and that His priesthood and kingdom were universal and everlasting.

Sec. III. (Mark xii. 38-40; Matt. xxiii.; Luke xx. 45-47.) The last public discourse of Jesus in the temple seems designed to prevent the good effects of His words and actions on the minds of the people being hindered by the authority of their teachers. The bad character of the scribes and Pharisees is therefore declared. St. Matthew gives a more full account of this public exposure of their wickedness. He relates, after the cautions addressed to the disciples and the people, the denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees, and the lamentation of Jesus over the impenitence and ruin of Jerusalem. The brief report of St. Luke is similar to that of St. Mark, referring only to the first part of the discourse. In this the teachers of the people are described as regarding only appearances and the honour of men; and as being really marked by peculiar inhumanity, and religious hypocrisy.

³⁸ According to St. Matthew, this was spoken to the multitude and to the disciples; according to St. Luke, to the disciples, in the hearing of all the people.

⁴⁰ With more knowledge, there is more responsibility: and more wickedness, if the knowledge is not rightly used.

The outward semblance of goodness will secure human honour.

They who pretend to be better than others may be worse and more guilty.

SEC. IV. ^{low's} ^{ring.} 41 And sitting opposite to the treasury, Jesus was observing how the multitude cast money into the treasury. And many rich men cast in much. 42 And one, a poor widow, coming cast in two mites, which make a farthing. 43 And calling to His disciples He said to them, Assuredly I declare to you, that this poor widow has cast in more than all who cast into the treasury. 44 For all cast in from their abundance, but she from her poverty cast in all that she had, the whole of her living.

SEC. IV. (Mark xii. 41-44; Luke xxi. 1-4.) Jesus was sitting in the court of the temple, where the chests were placed for the reception of voluntary offerings. Many rich men presented much, and a poor widow brought her small contribution. Jesus directed the attention of the disciples to her offering, and declared that it was the largest, because, in proportion to her means, it was the greatest expression of gratitude and of desire to render some willing service. He had declared that they who were receiving much honour from men were not approved by God; and now on the service of one despised by men He pronounces the highest commendation. The costly offerings and material magnificence of the temple were of no value in the sight of God; but the least sincere expression of spiritual worship is acceptable to Him. This lesson respecting the service of the heart, and the worth of material offerings, appropriately follows the preceding declarations of duty; and introduces the following prediction respecting the material temple.

42 St. Luke merely describes the offering as two mites. St. Mark gives the Roman equivalent.

The events and sayings related by St. John xii. 20-86 seem subsequent to this, when Jesus had gone out into the court of the Gentiles.

A loving mind desires to have some share in every service of God.

The moral standard for works and gifts is entirely different from the material.

Foreign Pulpit.

THE FULNESS OF CHRIST THE RICHES OF THE BELIEVER.

BY ALEXANDRE VINET.

(TRANSLATED BY REV. M. J. EVANS, B. A.)

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”—Col. ii. 9–15.

We must here, first of all, transport ourselves to the standpoint of those whom the apostle immediately addresses—the Church at Colosse.

The position of these recent converts from paganism was peculiar. Yesterday they perhaps said, “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;” now that all has been given them, they are afraid of being in want of all. Those who, poor, exclaimed yesterday, “We are rich,” being enriched, to-day exclaim, “We are poor.” As the apostle would say to others, and as he would have said yesterday to the Colossians, What is not wanting to you? so to-day he says to them, What is now lacking?

This is the idea of our text; and the argument of the apostle is one of great and overwhelming force. “The fulness of God dwells in substance in Christ,” says Paul (ver. 9). He only repeats or resumes that which he has before said. It is not only that the manifestations

of God are in Jesus Christ; God dwells in Him substantially.

To this declaration regarding Jesus Christ he attaches another regarding ourselves, and presents them as parallel the one to the other. In the same manner, the apostle seems to say, as the fulness of God dwells in Christ, so the fulness of Christ dwells in the believer; Christ is filled with God substantially, and the believer is filled with Christ, although not substantially; "and ye are complete in (filled with) him" (ver. 10).

Behold in what a magnificent sense the believer is filled with Jesus Christ! Just as Jesus Christ, as Son, doeth all that He seeth the Father do (John v. 19), so the disciple, the Christian, does all that he sees his Head, Jesus Christ, do. All the essential phases, all the solemn moments of the life and work of Jesus Christ in relation to the believer, have their repetition in the believer in relation to himself, are reproduced in the life and work of the believer; and this reproduction itself is the work of Christ. "We have been made one plant with him in the conformity of his death," says St. Paul (Rom. vi. 5); that is to say, we form a continuation in some sort of Jesus Christ, as the branches of the trunk, we are the living repetition of Jesus Christ. That is what the apostle calls the fulness of Christ in man, as he has spoken of a fulness of God in Christ. By this he implies, beyond doubt, that we have in Him all the advantages possible or desirable, for where there is fulness nothing is wanting, and there is nothing to add to that which is infinite.

But here there present themselves two observations, before proceeding to detail the riches of Jesus Christ in the believer—observations suggested by the words of the apostle himself.

1. Let us remark, in the first place, that the advantages of which he speaks, and which form this wealth, must seem strange to the eyes of the natural man. Under the name of advantages, they are losses; and

under the name of wealth, it is poverty in the eyes of the flesh ; for these benefits are duties, and *virtues*—virtue, that is to say, a force against oneself, or an effort of the will against itself. “To be spoiled, circumcised, buried ;” these are not advantages in his estimation ; these are not for him names of wealth ; he will give them another name. He will be able, no doubt, to consider these losses as the condition of an advantage, but not as that advantage itself, which is nevertheless the idea of St. Paul here, for he details the advantages which compose the riches of the Christian in these words, “spoiled, circumcised, buried.”

2. In the second place let us remark that these advantages, or these losses—as you regard them, are expressed here in the form of the present, and even of the past, and not in that of the future. Supposing them to be advantages, they are in any case presented here as accomplished facts, as good things acquired, and not as good things promised. The apostle says, “You have been circumcised, spoiled, buried ; you are raised ;” so closely does he connect the consequence with the principle, so inseparable does he judge them. There is even more in this passage : St. Paul omits the principle, the work of Christ without us ; at least there is no formal and direct reference to it ; he passes over the principle, and goes straight to the consequence, which he presents not as a part of the work, or its crowning, but as the work itself and all the work.

So then the distinction which we make St. Paul does not make ; that which is two for us, whether by nature or by date, is only one for him ; advantages and losses, principle and consequence, all this is one. That which we take for the burden connected with the benefit, Paul adduces as the benefit itself ; that which we regard as the correspondence on our part with the work of Christ, Paul presents as the work of Christ, as a part of the work accomplished in our favour. There is in this that which deranges all the ideas of the natural man ; but precisely

in this is the gospel; it is in this that is found its essence, its sublimity, its folly. He who does not understand it thus, who divides the work of Christ into burdens and benefits, who separates this work absolutely from our correspondence with this work, knows not the gospel, understands it not. What the man of the world regards as a condition of the benefit is that which Paul regards as the benefit itself. This is the characteristic idea of the gospel; and if this trait be cut off, nothing of it remains. But let us now see the detail, or the different aspects under which the apostle presents these riches or this fulness of Christ in us.

He presents it at first under a general aspect, as containing all the advantages whose loss the Colossians regret, or which others would cause them to regret; and even more, for Paul does not admit that these advantages are lost, he says that the fulness of Jesus Christ contains them. And you are complete in Him (ver. 10); he maintains that all these very advantages the Colossians possess, but transformed, spiritualized, and through this realized and definite, for it is only spirit which realizes the material, the latter being only the provisional and external form, the symbol.

Thus they extolled to the Colossians, these pagans of yesterday, the work of circumcision, and made them regret the want of it. We find it difficult to understand how any could make them regret the want of it. And yet this is only our own history under another name. Is it not too common and too natural to us, when the treasures of the Spirit are offered to us, to regret the material, to regret and ask for the onions of Egypt in presence of the manna? to regret the signs in presence of the things signified? They wished to make the Colossians regret Judaism; but Catholicism, a posthumous or resuscitated Judaism, have we never regretted it? do we never envy the *opus operatum* which we find in its rites, this apparent advantage of having accomplished our duty towards God by an external act, cir-

cumscribed in a given moment or space, whilst the spirit takes no part therein and adds nothing to it? to have accomplished one's duty by this finite rite, without the spirit being added to it to give it the character of the infinite? Love and the spirit are without limits; but the material, the rite is limited; and when we wish to find in the rite an intrinsic value, something which is sufficient, love and the spirit take their wings.

* * * *

However it be, St. Paul says to the Colossians (ver. 11): Do not regret circumcision; you have it, and indeed a better one; because the ancient law was the image of the new you have the true circumcision; that is, the spoiling not of a part, a fragment of the flesh, but of the whole body of sin. "Such is the circumcision of Christ, in whom you have been circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands in the spoiling (putting off) of the body of the flesh."

St. Paul does not stop at this. Your new advantages, says he (ver. 12), have a new sign, which marks their entire superiority over those advantages they wish you to regret. This sign is baptism, which marks not, as circumcision, a partial sacrifice, but a death and then a resurrection, the resurrection of a new man. This resurrection, this birth, takes place by means of faith; "being buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God."*

Now, as it was mighty in God to raise Jesus Christ from the dead, so it is mighty in Him to raise us spiritually, to give us to live again through faith (Rom. vi. 4, 5). This spiritual life, like that of the body, is at the disposal of Him who is Lord of life; it is not our work,

* *Later Note of Vinet.*—I think that here baptism is not a sign which the apostle opposes to another sign, to circumcision as a sign—but that baptism designs rather the spiritual fact of the laying aside of sin, so that the apostle opposes to an external sign, circumcision, a spiritual fact, a living reality. So the thought of St. Paul becomes more logical.

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¹³ And they sent to Him some of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, that they might ensnare Him in discourse. Sec.
Reply to
Pharisees
and Herodians

The wicked expect to profit by the removal of the righteous.

What is good passes from those who will not use it to those who will.

Those most honoured by God have not been most honoured by men.

SEC. III. (Mark xii. 13-17; Matt. xxii. 15-22; Luke xx. 20-26.) The priests, having failed to injure Jesus through His opposition to their own authority, sought to draw Him into collision with the Roman government. The Pharisees and Herodians were already allied in hostile purposes, and some of them were employed to propose, with the pretence of respect, a dangerous question. It was expected that the Messiah would free the Jews from the rule of foreigners, and therefore not sanction that rule by the payment of tribute. In the temple the question was asked, if the heathen government was thus to be supported? A negative reply would be a capital offence against the Roman emperor; a simple affirmative would greatly offend the Jewish people. Instead of a direct answer, Jesus, knowing their duplicity, asked for the current coin. This was a clear proof that Cæsar was then the supreme political authority in the land; as such he was acknowledged, and taxes were therefore due to his government. What was due to Cæsar might be paid; and, at the same time, what was due to God. The Divine government and the human were not opposed, as the questioners imagined. They might be in opposition, and then it was a duty to obey God rather than man. But they might be, and generally were, in accordance; and then submission to the Divine government required submission to the human. According to the views of the Jews, the subjects of the Messiah could not be the subjects of Cæsar. The answer of Jesus declared that there was no such contrariety. The respective provinces of the two governments were distinct. Taxes were not among the things which, belonging only to the Divine government, should be paid to God only. The things of Cæsar are chiefly outward, and may be taken by force; the things of God are chiefly inward, and must be given freely. There was no probability that a better government could, by violence, be substituted for the Roman; it was therefore the duty of the Jews to submit to that foreign rule, having become subject to it through their sins and the sins of their

¹⁴ Then they coming say to Him, Teacher, we know that Thou art truthful, and art not careful about any one; for Thou dost not look to the countenance of men, but teachest truthfully the way of God. Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Should we give, or not give?

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¹⁵ St. Luke describes them as pretending to be upright men, and as purposing to deliver Him to the governor.

¹⁶ The denarius was a Roman coin of silver, less than a shilling in value, and the usual payment for a day's labour. It bore the head and title of the emperor.

¹⁷ This is not an *argumentum ad hominem*; nor are there any examples of such reasoning in the discourses of Jesus. As they were receiving the benefits of the Roman government, it was but just that they should pay the taxes. All the coin of the country was not claimed.

¹⁸ The principle declared included an answer to the question proposed. In reply to the question of Pilate, Jesus asserted that He was a king, but that His kingdom was not of this world (John xviii. 36). In the statement of political duties St. Paul makes the duty of submission to magistrates the consequence of submission to the supreme governor; and refers to the services which rulers render to society, as the reason for the payment which is made to them (Rom. xiii. 6).

The best truths may be declared with the worst intentions.

¹⁸ And the Sadducees came to Him, who say that there is no resurrection; and they questioned Him, say- Sec. IV.
Reply to
Sadducees

All governments have their services, and consequently their dues.

No earthly governments can prevent the spiritual service of God.

That should not be rendered to them which is due to God only.

SEC. IV. (Mark xii. 18-27; Matt. xxii. 23-33; Luke xx. 27-40.) The enemies of Jesus were the first to propose their questions; and when they were foiled others came forward, influenced by curiosity, and seeking to maintain the opinions of their party. The Sadducees, who, from teaching that virtue should not be pursued for the sake of future reward, had come to deny that there were any rewards beyond the present life, proposed their question. They argued that there was not another life, because no satisfactory answer could be given to some questions respecting it. Jesus, in replying to their question, told them that they were in error, and traced this to two causes. First, they wrongly assumed that the Divine power was limited to the production of a life such as men now possessed. And secondly, they disregarded the testimony of Scripture, which, speaking of the relation of the departed to God, showed plainly that they were still alive and had not perished. The existence of the mind apart from any material frame, and the future resurrection of the decayed body, were not taught in the Old Testament, nor commonly believed by the Jews. The resurrection, or uprising, which they hoped for, was of the persons; and the life which they expected would follow death, was not deferred to the distant future. Jesus does not speak here of the resurrection of dead bodies, but of the restoration of men from the state of death. The testimony of Scripture which is adduced has no reference to the raising up of bodies from their graves; but it does declare the new life which is continued with God, when the natural life has disappeared from men. Such a life was denied by the Sadducees (Acts xxiii. 8), and was proved by the words of God. St. Paul says that the body which is sown is not raised, but that another comes from it (1 Cor. xv. 36). As the *sowing* of which he speaks precedes the *dying*, it must be the birth into this world which precedes death, and not the burial in the earth which follows. He taught that we have a heavenly habitation immediately, when the earthly tent is taken down; and that we have immortal garments at once, when

²¹ And the second offspring. And took her, and left also died. ²² In t wife of them wil wife.

²⁴ And Jesus in account in error, power of God? : they neither mari as angels who are

²⁵ But respecting have you not read i God spoke to him

the mortal are laid aside.
(2 Cor. v. 8).

¹⁹ The law is in Deut. x

²⁰ This question was on: different replies were given

²¹ St. Luke gives the cor are deemed worthy of the i that they cannot die, being

and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? ²⁷ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You therefore are much in error.

Div. III. *Didactic Discourses.* (XII. 28–44.)

²⁸ And one of the scribes coming forward, having ^{Sec.} heard them disputing, perceiving that He answered ^{The Ch} ^{Comma}

²⁷ St. Luke gives in addition the declaration “for all are alive to Him.” He also states that some of the scribes commended the answer of Jesus, and that with this the hostile questioning came to an end. St. Matthew says that the people were astonished at His teaching.

God is able to preserve old forms of life and to produce new.

Marriage, birth, and death, belong only to the earthly life.

The mission of Moses was confirmed by the testimony of Christ.

They who are now dead to men still live with God.

Div. III. (Chap. xii. 28–44.) The controversial colloquies were followed by other discourses; and of these four are now related, of the highest didactic importance. Three of these are given by St. Matthew, and two by St. Luke; other discourses are related by St. John.

Sec. I. (Mark. xii. 28–34; Matt. xxii. 34–40.) A scribe, who was a Pharisee and a teacher of the law, but not one of the enemies of Jesus, inquired, for his own instruction and that of the people, which was the greatest of the commandments. In reply Jesus referred, not to any particular precept or prohibition, but to two comprehensive statements respecting the dispositions and habits which men should cultivate,—the supreme love of God, and the love of others as of themselves. When the questioner acknowledged that these were better than all outward religious services, he was commended for his spiritual discernment, and told that he was near to the kingdom of God. The law of Moses was in part like other laws: it contained rules of *action*, delivered by authority, and supported by

them well, questioned Him, Which is the first commandment of all? ²⁹ Then Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, *Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God; the Lord alone.* ³⁰ *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy will, and with all thy strength.* This is the first commandment. ³¹ And a second is like,—this. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* There is not another commandment greater than these.

³² And the scribe said to Him, Well, Teacher, Thou

rewards and penalties, which were connected with *conduct*, irrespective of *character*; the man who *did* them *lived* and prospered by them. But besides these rules it had directions referring to the *dispositions* of the mind, which are not within the province of ordinary laws, not admitting of definition and enforcement; and these are of the highest moment. The question respecting the comparative value of the commands was much discussed among the Jews, and generally with a reference to the first class of commands, those concerning actions. Jesus passes over these, and selects two of the second class, respecting dispositions.

²⁸ St. Matthew says the questioner 'was one of the Pharisees who came to Jesus after the colloquy with the Sadducees, but does not describe him as an opponent. The term applied to his inquiry, *proving*, does not indicate hostility; it is used for the best purposes, or for the worst. The nature of the question shows that the intention was good, and this is confirmed by the commendation which follows.

²⁹ The quotation is from Deut. vi. 4, 5; St. Matthew does not give the declaration which precedes the command. The term Lord is here used as a proper name, and cannot be combined with numerals as a general noun. The Hebrew is simply,—Jehovah our God, Jehovah one. There are two propositions, the numeral being used adverbially, as in Zech. xiv. 9.

³⁰ The *heart* figuratively represents the mind as knowing. The three terms in the Hebrew text refer to the chief manifestations of mind, intelligence, sensibility, and energy.

³¹ This quotation is from Lev. xix. 18. Instead of the comment here given, St. Matthew has a statement of the dependence, on these two principles, of all the precepts of the law and the prophets.

³² The reply of the scribe, and the commendation he received, are

hast spoken truly, for there is One, and there is no other beside Him. ²³ And to love Him with all the mind, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength; and to love his neighbour as himself;—is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. ²⁴ And Jesus seeing him, that he answered wisely, said to him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no one ventured to question Him any more.

²⁵ And Jesus in conversation said, teaching in the temple, How do the Scribes declare that the Christ is David. Sec. II.
The Sc.

mentioned only here. St. Luke does not relate this conversation, having before given a conversation in which, by another lawyer, these two commands were given as the principles of the whole law (x. 27). He places after the controversial discourses a statement, similar to that here made, of the cessation of captious questions. Evidently to these St. Mark refers, though he has reserved the statement till the last inquiry, which was of a different character. By St. Matthew a similar statement is made after the next conversation.

There is but one God, who is to be supremely loved and honoured.

Men should regard the good of others with desire and delight, even as their own.

Sec. II. (Mark xii. 35–37; Matt. xxii. 41–46; Luke xx. 41–44.) After replying to various questions, Jesus proposed a question to some of the Pharisees and scribes, who remained with the multitude when the opponents had gone away. On their answer He raised an important inquiry, not as a critical puzzle, nor as a means of exposing incompetency; but to remind of the Divine appointment, through which the fulfilment of law would be secured; and to direct attention to the indications which O. T. prophecy afforded, of the real character of the kingdom of Messiah. If it had been, as was commonly supposed, an earthly kingdom, the son of David could not also be the Lord of David. But this was declared by David, and was taught him by the Spirit of God. The Anointed King, whom David described as his

David's son? ³⁶ For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, "*The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make thy adversaries a footstool for thy feet.*" ³⁷ David himself then called Him Lord; and whence is He his son? And a great multitude were hearing Him gladly.

Lord, was one whose kingdom belonged to all ages and nations of mankind, and must therefore be spiritual and Divine. The King, who was David's Lord and Saviour, was also to be an everlasting Priest, by whom the fulfilment of the law of love and righteousness would be secured. Such Jesus declared Himself to be. Standing in the temple, surrounded by a few followers who but partially understood Him, alone anticipating the coming events, He expressed the assurance that, as the Son of God, He should sit at the right hand of the Father, and that all which was in opposition would be made subject to Him. (Rom. i. 4.)

³⁵ The question here given was preceded, according to St. Matthew, by a question addressed to Pharisees, What do you think respecting the Christ? Of whom is He the Son? They said to Him—Of David. And so the following inquiry is given, as addressed to them.

³⁶ Psalm cx. also foretells the great *number* of people, of *many* nations, who, adorned with true *holiness*, would become the *willing* subjects of Messiah's kingdom. It then declares that this Divine purpose would be realized by a new priesthood,—a priesthood of *character*, and not of *ceremonies*. And lastly it indicates, that the opposition of earthly kingdoms would be overcome, and the new kingdom be established, by the temporary humiliation of Him whose kingdom and priesthood were peculiar, universal, and everlasting. The use here made of this psalm proves that it was regarded by all as unquestionably the prediction of David. Such a traditional testimony, apart from the authority of Christ, would be more trustworthy than modern conjectures, founded on the supposed superior suitableness of the composition to another writer. The military expressions of the psalm should be taken figuratively, for it teaches that, as the priesthood of Messiah differs from the Levitical, so does His kingdom from the kingdoms of the earth. All the evangelists state that Jesus reasoned from the declaration, as the prophecy of David. St. Matthew also says, that David spoke influenced by the Spirit; by St. Luke the quotation is given as from the Book of Psalms.

³⁸ And He said to them in His teaching, Beware of the scribes, who like walking about in robes, and greetings in the broad ways, ³⁹ and first seats in the synagogues, and first couches in the banquets; ⁴⁰ who eat up the houses of widows, and in pretence make long prayers. These will receive a heavier sentence.

Sec. I
Caution
against
Scribes.

David, moved by the Spirit of God, foretold that a son of his would rule over all, and acknowledged Him as his Lord.

Jesus declared that He was this Son, and that His priesthood and kingdom were universal and everlasting.

Sec. III. (Mark xii. 38-40; Matt. xxiii.; Luke xx. 45-47.) The last public discourse of Jesus in the temple seems designed to prevent the good effects of His words and actions on the minds of the people being hindered by the authority of their teachers. The bad character of the scribes and Pharisees is therefore declared. St. Matthew gives a more full account of this public exposure of their wickedness. He relates, after the cautions addressed to the disciples and the people, the denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees, and the lamentation of Jesus over the impenitence and ruin of Jerusalem. The brief report of St. Luke is similar to that of St. Mark, referring only to the first part of the discourse. In this the teachers of the people are described as regarding only appearances and the honour of men; and as being really marked by peculiar inhumanity, and religious hypocrisy.

³⁸ According to St. Matthew, this was spoken to the multitude and to the disciples; according to St. Luke, to the disciples, in the hearing of all the people.

⁴⁰ With more knowledge, there is more responsibility: and more wickedness, if the knowledge is not rightly used.

The outward semblance of goodness will secure human honour.

They who pretend to be better than others may be worse and more guilty.

Sec. IV.
Widow's
offering.

“ And sitting opposite to the treasury, Jesus was observing how the multitude cast money into the treasury. And many rich men cast in much. “ And one, a poor widow, coming cast in two mites, which make a farthing. “ And calling to His disciples He said to them, Assuredly I declare to you, that this poor widow has cast in more than all who cast into the treasury. “ For all cast in from their abundance, but she from her poverty cast in all that she had, the whole of her living.

Sec. IV. (Mark xii. 41-44; Luke xxi. 1-4.) Jesus was sitting in the court of the temple, where the chests were placed for the reception of voluntary offerings. Many rich men presented much, and a poor widow brought her small contribution. Jesus directed the attention of the disciples to her offering, and declared that it was the largest, because, in proportion to her means, it was the greatest expression of gratitude and of desire to render some willing service. He had declared that they who were receiving much honour from men were not approved by God; and now on the service of one despised by men He pronounces the highest commendation. The costly offerings and material magnificence of the temple were of no value in the sight of God, but the least sincere expression of spiritual worship is acceptable to Him. This lesson respecting the service of the heart, and the worth of material offerings, appropriately follows the preceding declarations of duty; and introduces the following prediction respecting the material temple.

“ St. Luke merely describes the offering as two mites. St. Mark gives the Roman equivalent.

The events and sayings related by St. John xii. 80-86 seem subsequent to this, when Jesus had gone out into the court of the Gentiles.

A loving mind desires to have some share in every service of God.

The moral standard for works and gifts is entirely different from the material.

Foreign Pulpit.

THE FULNESS OF CHRIST THE RICHES OF THE BELIEVER.

BY ALEXANDRE VINET.

(TRANSLATED BY REV. M. J. EVANS, B. A.)

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”—COL. ii. 9–15.

We must here, first of all, transport ourselves to the standpoint of those whom the apostle immediately addresses—the Church at Colosse.

The position of these recent converts from paganism was peculiar. Yesterday they perhaps said, “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;” now that all has been given them, they are afraid of being in want of all. Those who, poor, exclaimed yesterday, “We are rich,” being enriched, to-day exclaim, “We are poor.” As the apostle would say to others, and as he would have said yesterday to the Colossians, What is not wanting to you? so to-day he says to them, What is now lacking?

This is the idea of our text; and the argument of the apostle is one of great and overwhelming force. “The fulness of God dwells in substance in Christ,” says Paul (ver. 9). He only repeats or resumes that which he has before said. It is not only that the manifestations

of God are in Jesus Christ; God dwells in Him substantially.

To this declaration regarding Jesus Christ he attaches another regarding ourselves, and presents them as parallel the one to the other. In the same manner, the apostle seems to say, as the fulness of God dwells in Christ, so the fulness of Christ dwells in the believer; Christ is filled with God substantially, and the believer is filled with Christ, although not substantially; "and ye are complete in (filled with) him" (ver. 10).

Behold in what a magnificent sense the believer is filled with Jesus Christ! Just as Jesus Christ, as Son, doeth all that He seeth the Father do (John v. 19), so the disciple, the Christian, does all that he sees his Head, Jesus Christ, do. All the essential phases, all the solemn moments of the life and work of Jesus Christ in relation to the believer, have their repetition in the believer in relation to himself, are reproduced in the life and work of the believer; and this reproduction itself is the work of Christ. "We have been made one plant with him in the conformity of his death," says St. Paul (Rom. vi. 5); that is to say, we form a continuation in some sort of Jesus Christ, as the branches of the trunk, we are the living repetition of Jesus Christ. That is what the apostle calls the fulness of Christ in man, as he has spoken of a fulness of God in Christ. By this he implies, beyond doubt, that we have in Him all the advantages possible or desirable, for where there is fulness nothing is wanting, and there is nothing to add to that which is infinite.

But here there present themselves two observations, before proceeding to detail the riches of Jesus Christ in the believer—observations suggested by the words of the apostle himself.

1. Let us remark, in the first place, that the advantages of which he speaks, and which form this wealth, must seem strange to the eyes of the natural man. Under the name of advantages, they are losses; and

under the name of wealth, it is poverty in the eyes of the flesh ; for these benefits are duties, and *virtues*—virtue, that is to say, a force against oneself, or an effort of the will against itself. “To be spoiled, circumcised, buried ;” these are not advantages in his estimation ; these are not for him names of wealth ; he will give them another name. He will be able, no doubt, to consider these losses as the condition of an advantage, but not as that advantage itself, which is nevertheless the idea of St. Paul here, for he details the advantages which compose the riches of the Christian in these words, “spoiled, circumcised, buried.”

2. In the second place let us remark that these advantages, or these losses—as you regard them, are expressed here in the form of the present, and even of the past, and not in that of the future. Supposing them to be advantages, they are in any case presented here as accomplished facts, as good things acquired, and not as good things promised. The apostle says, “You have been circumcised, spoiled, buried ; you are raised ;” so closely does he connect the consequence with the principle, so inseparable does he judge them. There is even more in this passage : St. Paul omits the principle, the work of Christ without us ; at least there is no formal and direct reference to it ; he passes over the principle, and goes straight to the consequence, which he presents not as a part of the work, or its crowning, but as the work itself and all the work.

So then the distinction which we make St. Paul does not make ; that which is two for us, whether by nature or by date, is only one for him ; advantages and losses, principle and consequence, all this is one. That which we take for the burden connected with the benefit, Paul adduces as the benefit itself ; that which we regard as the correspondence on our part with the work of Christ, Paul presents as the work of Christ, as a part of the work accomplished in our favour. There is in this that which deranges all the ideas of the natural man ; but precisely

in this is the gospel; it is in this that is found its essence, its sublimity, its folly. He who does not understand it thus, who divides the work of Christ into burdens and benefits, who separates this work absolutely from our correspondence with this work, knows not the gospel, understands it not. What the man of the world regards as a condition of the benefit is that which Paul regards as the benefit itself. This is the characteristic idea of the gospel; and if this trait be cut off, nothing of it remains. But let us now see the detail, or the different aspects under which the apostle presents these riches or this fulness of Christ in us.

He presents it at first under a general aspect, as containing all the advantages whose loss the Colossians regret, or which others would cause them to regret; and even more, for Paul does not admit that these advantages are lost, he says that the fulness of Jesus Christ contains them. And you are complete in Him (ver. 10); he maintains that all these very advantages the Colossians possess, but transformed, spiritualized, and through this realized and definite, for it is only spirit which realizes the material, the latter being only the provisional and external form, the symbol.

Thus they extolled to the Colossians, these pagans of yesterday, the work of circumcision, and made them regret the want of it. We find it difficult to understand how any could make them regret the want of it. And yet this is only our own history under another name. Is it not too common and too natural to us, when the treasures of the Spirit are offered to us, to regret the material, to regret and ask for the onions of Egypt in presence of the manna? to regret the signs in presence of the things signified? They wished to make the Colossians regret Judaism; but Catholicism, a posthumous or resuscitated Judaism, have we never regretted it? do we never envy the *opus operatum* which we find in its rites, this apparent advantage of having accomplished our duty towards God by an external act, cir-

cumscribed in a given moment or space, whilst the spirit takes no part therein and adds nothing to it? to have accomplished one's duty by this finite rite, without the spirit being added to it to give it the character of the infinite? Love and the spirit are without limits; but the material, the rite is limited; and when we wish to find in the rite an intrinsic value, something which is sufficient, love and the spirit take their wings.

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However it be, St. Paul says to the Colossians (ver. 11): Do not regret circumcision; you have it, and indeed a better one; because the ancient law was the image of the new you have the true circumcision; that is, the spoiling not of a part, a fragment of the flesh, but of the whole body of sin. "Such is the circumcision of Christ, in whom you have been circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands in the spoiling (putting off) of the body of the flesh."

St. Paul does not stop at this. Your new advantages, says he (ver. 12), have a new sign, which marks their entire superiority over those advantages they wish you to regret. This sign is baptism, which marks not, as circumcision, a partial sacrifice, but a death and then a resurrection, the resurrection of a new man. This resurrection, this birth, takes place by means of faith; "being buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God."*

Now, as it was mighty in God to raise Jesus Christ from the dead, so it is mighty in Him to raise us spiritually, to give us to live again through faith (Rom. vi. 4, 5). This spiritual life, like that of the body, is at the disposal of Him who is Lord of life; it is not our work,

* *Later Note of Vinet.*—I think that here baptism is not a sign which the apostle opposes to another sign, to circumcision as a sign—but that baptism designs rather the spiritual fact of the laying aside of sin, so that the apostle opposes to an external sign, circumcision, a spiritual fact, a living reality. So the thought of St. Paul becomes more logical.

it is the work of God, who, having raised Jesus Christ personally, raises us spiritually. We must notice here that the apostle does not say, You must be baptized, you must die, you must be raised; but, You have been baptized, you have died, you are raised; he anticipates the final result, because—as we have remarked above—all the results are contained in the principle, as the whole oak is, in germ, in the acorn. There is here an admirable movement, an aspiration of hope and faith.

It is thus that God, by one act, does for the Colossians two things, the one in the other; “and you being dead in your sins,” says the apostle, “and the circumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened” (ver. 13). That is to say, they were members neither of the new covenant nor of the old covenant of the law; they were dead in two senses: in the first place in an absolute sense, dead in their sins because they were sinners; and in the second place in a relative sense, dead in the uncircumcision of their flesh, inasmuch as they were “strangers from the covenants of promise” made to the Jews. Well, Jesus Christ, in making the Colossians Christians, makes them in some sort Israelites, and they are put in possession of the advantages of this people. But the circumcision of Christ avails them far beyond the circumcision of Abraham. In introducing them at once into the privileges of the new covenant, Paul leaves them nothing to regret or to envy in the privileges of the old covenant, for they enter into advantages much greater. Both Jews and Gentiles, the benefit of God renders us all equal, and causes all temporal or superficial inequalities to disappear; “he hath quickened us together.”

Whether Jews or Gentiles, we were all equally dead, for in death there is no distinction. What significance have inequalities in death? What advantage can one dead person have over another, since to have an advantage one must be, one must live? Those whom God quickens, or whom He causes to pass from death unto life, “in freely forgiving them all their trespasses,” were

all equal, because they were all dead. Behold how Paul overthrows the arguments of the Jews, and scatters the regrets of the Colossians: the Jews who pride themselves on the advantages conferred upon them by the law, and the temple, etc., are dead as you; what have you, O Colossians, to envy in the dead?

* * * *

What more will you? what can you regret? says Paul to them. Can it be this law of ordinances, of rites (ver. 14), which has no more place in the gospel? Know that the true Israelites understood it not as you; they understood it as true Christians; they understood it as St. Paul; this law of rites was for them, as for him, a "handwriting which was against them"; for what did this law accomplish, but to declare the necessity for a satisfaction which it is out of our power to render? This sign, as long as it lasts, does it not attest that the satisfaction has not yet been accomplished? Now, the satisfaction having taken place, the handwriting has been destroyed. If then you wish these rites, you renounce the advantages of that work which has been accomplished; if you wish the work that has been done, you must renounce the rites which announce that this work is yet to be done, for in presence of the reality the sign disappears; the rites ought now to disappear, as the stars of the night are extinguished before the day, or as the dawn is absorbed in the noontide heat. "St. Paul maintains," says Calvin, "that the ceremonies have been abolished. And to prove it he compares them to a note of hand by which God held us bound, that we might not be able to deny we were guilty. Now he says we have been so delivered from condemnation, that the handwriting of it itself has been blotted out, that there should be no more memorial of it." (*Calvin, in loco.*)

But how has this handwriting, which witnessed against us, been destroyed? "It hath been taken out of the way," says Paul, "by Jesus Christ, who hath nailed it to his cross." Jesus Christ has put Himself in our

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place, He has paid for us, and this especially by His sacrifice.

The Colossians, and the false teachers who corrupt them, do not deny that Jesus Christ has borne our sins in His own body on the tree, and has borne the curse of the law. He has therefore destroyed all malediction in regard to us; now the law of rites signified no other thing. The satisfaction is then made by the work of Jesus Christ; if the debt is paid He has blotted it out, made void the note of hand; this then ought to be torn, and according to the energetic expression of St. Paul it has been *pierced with a nail*. But if Jesus Christ has not abolished the rites which attest that a sacrifice is necessary to expiate sin, He has not accomplished this sacrifice. We must therefore renounce Jesus Christ as having wrought the work of expiation, or renounce the preservation of this handwriting. The reasoning of the apostle proceeds yet further; not only does he show the Colossians that the handwriting exists no longer, but that they are very rash to demand again this law of rites. Do you not see, says Paul, that this law of rites is contrary to you, hostile? and that you cannot re-establish it without placing yourself under the government of the law, which *as law* is implacable?

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Now (ver. 15) what do you regret, or what is wanting to you? Do you need, like the Israelites, companions of Moses in the wilderness, gods who shall go before you? But you have this in Jesus Christ. These good angels whom you adore, and these evil angels whom you fear, are unauthorized divinities whom Jesus Christ in His triumph leads after Him as captives, prisoners, the evil as vanquished foes, the good as involuntary usurpers: "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them on the cross." . . . It is thus Paul chastises by his word the disquiet and unjust regrets of the Colossians. It is thus he reproves them for wishing to give supports or

aids to Jesus Christ, the only Mediator, and to complete, by the works of a dead law, the finished work of the Son of God.

There remains now the question, Do we not bear our part in these reproaches? Is that principle destroyed in us, which led the Colossians to add something to Jesus Christ? And if there are not with us the superstitions and additions of the Colossians, does Jesus Christ suffice for us in His simplicity? Do we accept willingly, in its naked truth, the doctrine of the gospel, the doctrine of gratuitous salvation, and consequently of an abandonment, without reserve, to the mercy of God? Would we not wish to add something to this? Do we not furtively cast into the balance something of our own, to make weight, whilst we diminish the weight of the work of Jesus Christ? This is a question upon which we have all to examine ourselves.

Outlines.

Christ Jesus the Mediator.

“One mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”—1 TIM. ii. 5.

IN the context the apostle exhorts Timothy to make supplication, etc., for all men; to bear them on his mind at the throne of grace; to pray that they may be delivered from the path of death, and brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. The apostle enforces this exhortation by a two-fold argument; it “is good, and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.” It is in accordance with His will that all men should be prayed for. Do not limit your prayers. Grasp the wide world with its teeming myriads of precious but perishing souls, with the arms of faith and prayer, and carry it to the throne of grace, asking God to pour out His Spirit upon it and to save it. The other argument is, He willeth

“all men to be saved.” He hath “no pleasure in the death of the wicked.” It is contrary to His loving nature to banish them to outer darkness; but when they die in their sins He is under the necessity of so doing. Every soul Satan succeeds in ruining, he robs God of a child, heaven of a citizen. The *proof* that it is His will that all should be saved,—Christ Jesus gave “himself a ransom for all.” Our world is a redeemed world. Christ, having assumed our nature, bears the same relationship to every individual. Mankind, as a whole, has been redeemed. We can go to every individual throughout the wide world, and unhesitatingly say, “You are not your own: ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” Christ the ransomer is also Christ the mediator.

I. THE NECESSITY OF A MEDIATOR.

A mediator is one who interposes between two parties who are at variance, to propose terms which both can comply with and thereby become reconciled, or to obtain some favour for the offenders from the offended. God is the offended, we are the offenders; yet He is willing to forgive and to receive us to His favour.

But there are difficulties existing—a mighty gulf separating us. He cannot cross to us; we cannot cross to Him.

His holiness is one obstacle. “He is of purer eyes than to behold evil.” “He cannot look on iniquity.” Anything unholy attempting to approach Him would be at once consumed. This holiness will not make the least allowance for sin, nor overlook one act of guilt. It is, and for ever will be, at variance with everything of a sinful nature. It has, and for ever will have, an unchangeable antipathy towards everything that is impure or unholy. Guilty and polluted as we are, we cannot approach that Holy Being without being at once consumed as were Korah and his companions. We at once see the necessity of a mediator.

His justice is another obstacle. “Justice and judg-

ment are the habitation of his throne.” The justice of the Most High stands in threatening array against every sinner, and over him it pronounces the solemn verdict, “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” Apart from Christ, the Most High can no more lay His hand on the guilty sinner who is sinking into the deep abyss of ruin, and snatch him from the everlasting burnings; He can no more release him from the grasp of the broken law, or write pardon on the catalogue of his sins—than He can forget His Son’s agony in Gethsemane, or His sufferings on Calvary.

Maintaining the honour and dignity of His government was another obstacle. The great Legislator of heaven has enacted a law that sin must be punished, that death must be the penalty of disobedience. When man transgressed, if Divine justice with flaming sword and frowning brow had chased the guilty one down to the abodes of darkness and of death, He would have acted quite consistently with the law He laid down. But for the Divine Legislator to disregard the law He made, and allow sin to pass unpunished, the transgressor to escape, would be to annul all law, to destroy all government. This He could not do. He could hurl the thunders of a broken law; He could wreak the fierceness of Divine vengeance; He could pour out all the vast heaps of accumulated wrath on the innocent head of His well-beloved Son; He could command the sword to awake and to smite His Fellow; He could withdraw His presence in the hour of His Son’s bitterest agony, and He could allow His life-blood to flow: but to cast the least reflection on the glory of His own government, or the least stain to appear on His own governing, He could not do. That peace on earth and glory to God may harmonize, there must be a mediator.

Thus we have noticed the need of a mediator on the part of Jehovah. The mediator is equally necessary on the part of man. Man has fallen from the heights of innocence, holiness, and happiness, into the depths of

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II. CHRIST

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From this subject we learn—1. To admire the wisdom of God in providing such a Mediator. 2. The love of Christ in occupying such a position. 3. The folly of sinners in rejecting this Mediator.

Grimpo, Salop.

I. WATKINS.

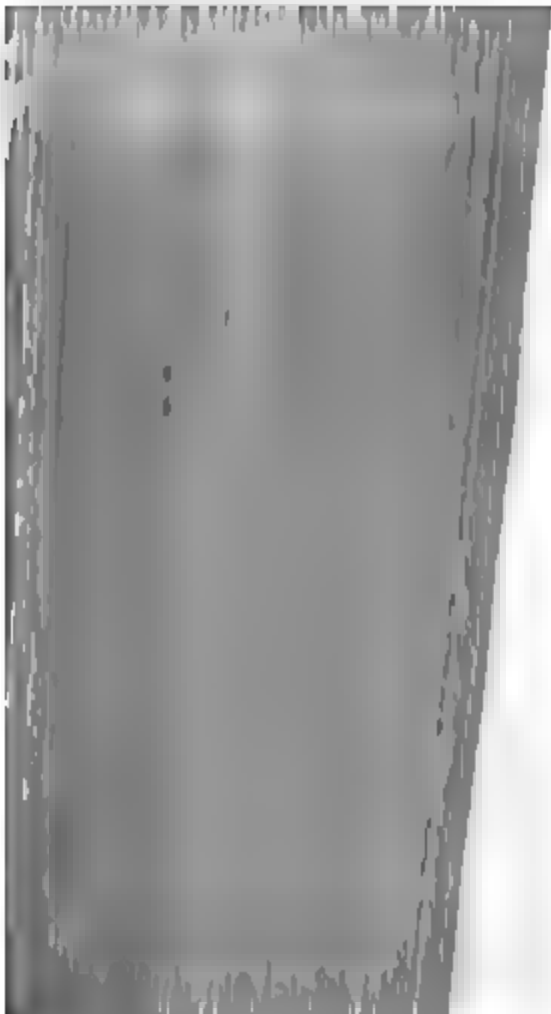
Intellect and Christ.

“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”—MATT. ii. 1, 2.

THERE are two important events in life: the day of our birth, and the day of our death. The interest of these events depends upon our character and station in life. A pauper is born and buried without notice; the birth or death of a prince may affect the destiny of nations. Christ's birth was of the highest importance to all men in all time. For thousands of years it was foretold, expected, and anxiously desired. Christ was a light to guide, a Saviour to redeem, a King to judge.

This passage teaches:—

I. THAT MEN OF INTELLECTUAL CULTURE HAVE INQUIRED EARNESTLY AFTER CHRIST. “Behold, there came wise men from the east, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews?” *They were men of culture, “wise men;” they were anxious inquirers, “where is he?”* The followers of Christ have chiefly been men of ordinary culture. “Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty.” The disciples were fishermen and publicans, and it was the common people that heard Christ gladly. Yet His followers have not been exclusively from the lower ranks of society. In every age great and good men have inquired anxiously after Christ. In the patriarchal dispensation Moses, Abraham, Joseph, and



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and conscience. It is important to find health, or wealth, or friends; but the most blessed discovery of all is to find Christ. When a man knows Christ has come, he will find where He is.

IV. MEN OF INTELLECTUAL CULTURE HAVE RENDERED THE MOST DEVOUT HOMAGE TO CHRIST. "Have come to worship him." (1) *Here is a recognition of Christ's supremacy.* (2) *Here is a declaration of their devotion.* Man is a worshipper; Christ claims our worship; Christ is worthy of our worship. *We must worship Christ intelligently. We must worship Christ devoutly. We must worship Christ practically.*

Stockport.

JOSEPH WOODHOUSE.

The Grace of God Appearing.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."—TIT. ii. 11, 12.

By the "grace of God" in the text we understand the gospel.

I. The gospel in its characteristic: "For the *grace of God*," etc. 1. *It originated in God's grace.* 2. *It reveals God's grace.* 3. *It communicates God's grace.*

II. The gospel in its appearance: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation *hath appeared*." The plan of salvation was gradually developed. 1. *It appeared in promises.* 2. *In types and shadows.* 3. *In substance, in the life and death of Christ.*

III. The gospel in its teaching: "teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts," etc. The gospel teaches the whole duty of man. 1. *It teaches him what course he is to renounce:* "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts." 2. *It teaches him what course to pursue:* "we should live soberly, righteously, and godly." These three terms take in the whole duty of man; all the other virtues emanate from these, either single or united. We

have man's duty—(1) In reference to himself, "live soberly." (2) In reference to his fellow-men, "righteously." (3) In reference to his God, "godly."

St. Bride's, Monmouth.

J. MORGAN.

Heart Searchings.

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."—*JER. xxix. 13.*

1. MAN, through all the ages of time, has been influenced by a principle of reform. The pathway of the generations has been trodden amidst the Babel-tongued shouts of "Progress!" The landmarks of our forefathers have been overpassed. The Utopianism of one day has been the commonplace of the next. The development of this principle has been diverse—the application one. True progress has ever been characterized by diligent *research*. For, although we may occasionally stumble across a fundamental law, still it is the policy, as it has ever been the practice, of prudence, to estimate its worth and gauge its capabilities ere it be made a rule of life. And so we may well-nigh estimate the excellence of acquirement by intensity of endeavour to attain, and calculate worth by the economics of moral labour. So is it in our Christian life. We are accustomed to value the attainments of difficulty; so all spiritual progress must be the outcome of diligent "searching."

2. This searching is the child of necessity. As all knowledge is the result of inquiry, so is inquiry the production of accomplishment. For possession begets desire; the perfecting of one design reveals the incompleteness of another, or the converse; the failure of one scheme throws into bolder relief the success of another. Mental conquest reveals our ignorance. Crucifixion of the flesh is the birth of the spirit; the sad wail of the world's requiem forms the prelude to the swelling "song of Moses and the Lamb."

3. The searching, to be successful, must also be *thorough*: "with all your heart." The discoveries of insincerity are accidental. "*Heart searchings*" are illumined by the light of heaven.

Application—(1) The ultimate and inevitable object of search, "*me.*" (2) The certainty of success assured, dependent only upon the one condition named, *i.e.* *earnestness*, "*Ye shall find me.*" (3) "Searching" is not always strenuous exertion; study the might of *systematic inaction*. "Canst thou by searching (alone) find out God?" "*Wait* patiently for him." "Stand still and see the salvation of God." (4) Note the individual reference of the text: "*Ye shall seek me, and find me,*" etc.

Blackburn.

T. H. B.

Germes of Sermons.

Damnation.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."—MARK xvi. 16.

CHRIST'S "sayings" determined the destiny of all who heard them, and this peculiarity He specially pointed out as enduring for ever. To have heard these "sayings" is to have incurred the gravest responsibility. A man may read the Ethics of Aristotle, and treat the reasoning with contempt without endangering his fate; but no man can read Christ's "sayings" without finding "saved" upon one side and "damned" upon the other. Is this dogmatism on the part of Christ? Undoubtedly. God must be dogmatic. If God could hesitate, He would not be God. Do we stumble at the solemn words, "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned"? Why should we? An agriculturist says practically, "Go ye into all the world, and say to every

creature that there is a particular season for sowing seed: he that believeth shall be saved—shall have a harvest; he that believeth not shall be lost—shall have no harvest." There is thus a gospel of agriculture: why not a gospel of salvation? Men's disbelief of God will damn them in farming; why not in religion? Does God speak decisively in the one case, and hesitatingly in the other? There must be a climacteric point—a point of saving or damning—in all the declarations of God, because He has spoken the *ultimate* word on all the subjects which He has disclosed. The *truth* upon any matter, high or low, is the point of salvation or damnation. The man who merely points out the right road to a traveller is in a position (with proper modification of the terms) to say to that traveller, "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned:" in other words, "Go thus, and you will reach the object of your journey; but go so, and you will never reach it." This is the position which Christ assumes, "He that believeth me hath life; he that believeth not me hath not life." Is such a projection of His personality consistent with His being simply one who spoke with "the authoritative tone and earnestness of a Jew"?—"Ecce Deus," by JOSEPH PARKER, D.D.

Original Depravity.

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Ps. li. 5.

MEN may come upon the doctrine of original depravity in one of two different ways. For example, they may come upon it as a dogma in theology; the first thing that some theologians do is to assail human nature, to describe it as being covered with wounds and bruises and putrefying sores, and as deserving nothing but eternal burning. Human nature resists this as a slander: it says, "No; I have good impulses, upward desires, generous emotions towards my fellow-creatures; I resent your

theological calumnies." So much for the first method of approaching the doctrine. The second is totally unlike it. A man, for example, heartily accepts Jesus Christ, studies Him with most passionate devotion, and grows daily more like Him, in all purity, gentleness, and self-oblivion. From this altitude he looks back upon his former self; he compares the human nature with which he started with the human nature he has attained, and involuntarily, by the sheer necessity of the contrast, he says, "I was born in sin and shapen in iniquity." This conclusion he comes to, not by dogmatic teaching, but by dogmatic experience; what he never could have understood as an opinion he realizes as a fact.

Suppose a tree to be conscious, and let it illustrate what is meant by growing into a right understanding of this hard doctrine. Tell the tree in April that it is bare and ungainly in appearance; very barren and naked altogether. The tree says, "Nay; I am rooted in the earth; my branches are strong; I live in the light; I drink the dew; and I am beautiful; the winds rock me, and many a bird twitters on my boughs." This is its April creed. Go to the same tree after it has had a summer's experience; it has felt the quickening penetration of the solar fire, quenched its thirst in summer showers, felt the sap circulating through its veins; the leaves have come out on branch and twig, the blossoms have blushed and bloomed through long days of light; fruit has been formed and mellowed into maturity. Now hear the tree! "I am not what I was in April; my very identity seems to be changed; when men called me bare and rugged I did not believe them a few months ago; now I see what they meant—their verdict was sound: I thought the April light very beautiful, but it is nothing to the blazing splendour of the later months; I liked the twitter of the spring birds, but it is poor compared with the song of those that came in June: I feel as if I had been born again."—*Ibid.*

Christ Rejecting Men.

“Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me.” *MATT. XIX. 21.*

THE young man made out that he was nothing less than an embodiment of the Decalogue,—he had gathered the very elements of his life at Sinai. Surely Christ could not resist this impersonation of the Ten Commandments. They were written on tables of stone, but here was a table of flesh. Christ was actually more exacting with this young man—required more of him than He required of the publican, the adulteress, and the thief. Why not? Tall men can reach higher than short men. Others brought nothing but sin, this man brought the Decalogue without (as he imagined) a wrinkle or a stain. What wonder, then, seeing that strait is the gate and narrow is the way, that Christ should answer, “Go and sell all that thou hast, and give it unto the poor, and follow me”? The man had grown prosperous, with all his commandment-keeping, and now he required to be pulled sharply up on the side of his wealth, to see whether the commandments or the money had the greater hold upon him. There was no other method of meeting the case. The fortress of self must be stormed. Every prop must be struck down, every link broken, or he must remain outside the strait gate. The young man knew not that the gates to all great kingdoms are strait, and that the ways are narrow; he had thought much of the kingdom, but nothing of the way. This instance certainly shows that Christ did not care to give merely numerical strength to His cause. With Him, as with all true calculators, the question was not one of numbers but of hearts. One heart under the inspiration of love was of immeasurably greater value than any number governed by the shifting policy of the hour. The *I am*, not the *I have*, was Christ’s standard of valuation. How, then, could any man who had “great possessions” reconcile himself

to settlement in Christ's society? The thing was impossible. The outside was greater than the inside, so a catastrophe was inevitable. Manifestly the young man could not move through riches to Christ, though many a man has moved through Christ to riches. There is nothing in Christ to prevent a man having "a hundred-fold more in the present," but much in the present life to hinder a man having Christ. To-day this fact is illustrated on an extended scale; most of the rich men who are now in Christ's society came to Him when they were poor. It is difficult, from so narrow an observation as one individual is able to make, to pronounce definitely upon the subject; but the peril of censoriousness may be escaped by merely putting a question,—How many men having great possessions pass the strait gate set before the kingdom of heaven? Does the spiritual or the material exercise the keener influence upon such men? Is the expression "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven," with or without application to the men of to-day? There is nothing in the constitution of the Christian kingdom to prevent a man becoming rich, but there is much in wealth to keep a man from thinking seriously about the Christian kingdom.—*Ibid.*

Reviews.

ECCE DEUS: ESSAYS ON THE LIFE AND DOCTRINE OF JESUS CHRIST. By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D. *Hodder & Stoughton.*

As with a certain class in the domain of religion there is a growing disposition to shift upon others the duty of thinking and verifying the opinions they profess, so also in literature. The present is an age so busy that little time is found, or disposition manifested, for arriving at truth by the old fashioned methods of weighing evidence and examining facts. One of the consequences of this is that authority too often takes the

place of evidence, great names are of more weight than great arguments. The busy public, ere looking at what is said, first inquires *who said it*. Knowing well the signs of the times, the caterers for public patronage now seek that articles in periodicals be headed by great names. To a publisher a great name is now of more value than a great book. A book published anonymously must have preeminent excellence if it is to meet with public favour. The best of all tests of the intrinsic value of a book is the fact that notwithstanding this disadvantage repeated editions of it are called for. The eminent author of "Ecce Deus" chose that the public should pronounce its verdict upon his volume ere they should know who was the writer. No small satisfaction must he have received from the favourable way in which in well-nigh every quarter his work has been welcomed. To gratify his numerous friends, he has in this impression allowed his name to appear on the title page. Most of our readers will recognise in that name the originator of this periodical, and its able editor for the first two years of its existence. In consequence of this his connection with the *Pulpit Analyst* at the time of publication, no review of "Ecce Deus" has hitherto appeared in these pages.

In form and style, in originality of conception and freshness and vigour of thought, "Ecce Deus" bears much resemblance to "Ecce Homo," a book which has attracted even greater attention. The authors of these two books adopt different methods of interpreting the character of Christ, the one working from the central fact of the incarnation, the other preferring to treat the character of Jesus independently of what may be considered doctrinal questions. We humbly think Dr. Parker's objections to the method adopted by the author of "Ecce Homo" somewhat too strongly put. This method may be better suited for one class of minds; whilst his own, which most believers will prefer, is better suited for another: but both works we believe in the end will establish the same truth that CHRIST is GOD.

Viewed as a life of Jesus Christ, which it does not profess to be, "Ecce Deus" is incomplete and fragmentary. But the fragments are colossal and unique, and are all illustrative of the life and doctrine of the central figure. The author takes always a wide base, and lays down broad principles. As in

the cartoons of Raphael, to which the essays may be not inaptly compared, the canvas is large and the lines bold and vigorous, and every expression truthful and lifelike.

The first chapter is on "The Incarnation," the radical mystery in the life of Christ. This mystery we are prepared for, as "in other senses than that of the procreation of human life there have been miraculous conceptions in every age—conceptions by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost too. Every foremost thought of God among men, every struggle of the soul in the direction in which God is supposed to have gone, has been an effect of Divine operation upon the mind." "The Inauguration" occupies two chapters: "the measure of consciousness is the measure of life The first public intimation of consciousness of His great position, on the part of Christ, if we except the answer made to His mother, is found in immediate connection with His baptism Up to that, in all probability, Christ was not fully conscious of His Messiahship. The poor frail flesh which He had inherited from a depraved race could not have borne the presence of full consciousness for thirty years: when it did come, it consumed Him in as many months." To the question, Did Christ suffer in the wilderness merely as any other man? our author answers, "Suffering is a question of nature. The educated man suffers more than the uneducated man; the poet probably suffers more than the mathematician; the commanding officer suffers more in a defeat than the common soldier. The more life, the more suffering; the billows of sorrow being in proportion to the volume of our manhood. Now Jesus was not merely a man, he was MAN; and by the very compass of His manhood He suffered more than any mortal can endure." The difference as a teacher between Jesus and the greatest names in history, he puts forcibly: "Christ was preeminently a talker. 'Never man spake like this man' was the testimony of His enemies. After reading the doctrines of Plato, Socrates, or Aristotle, we feel that the specific difference between their words and Christ's is the difference between an inquiry and a revelation. We feel as if at any moment they might push a speculation too far, or suddenly turn off at a wrong angle—as if they were groping their way along dim and perilous paths, throwing gossamers over the dark rivers and tempting men to walk over the unsubstantial bridge; again and again they run the risk

of exalting a riddle into a problem, or settling a definition into a law. With this the method of Jesus Christ most strikingly contrasts. There is, account for it as men please, an authority in every tone; His language is clear, and if short it is final; it never betrays the faintest sign of hesitancy on the part of the speaker; if it were an immediate revelation from heaven, there could not be a sharper outline or a firmer emphasis."

The author's remarks upon "The Written Word" are full of originality and beauty. "The book claims to have had an origin as mysterious as the birth of Christ—combining the human and Divine. The hand is man's; the voice is God's. . . . The value of those writings may be best represented by the term *life*. We know they are inspired, because they are inspiring. The living man is the best confirmation of the living book." There is a powerful chapter on Eternal Punishments, opposed to the opinions that seem to be gaining ground if we may judge from the number of publications that seek to prove that future punishments are not eternal. The chapters on "The Church," "Christ adjusting Human Relationships," "The Cross of Christ," etc., are all full of life-stirring thoughts, and on every page give evidence of deep insight into, and true sympathy with, spiritual truth. But space will not permit us to give here further extracts; specimens of style, which will serve also to show how suggestive the book is to the preacher, are given in pp. 703–707.

The position of one or two of the chapters might with some advantage we think be altered. It would give the book more of the appearance of unity, if the second chapter, on the written word, were removed to somewhere near the end of the volume. This chapter would find a more fitting place alongside of the chapters, "These Sayings of Mine," and "Christ as an Interlocutor." By this arrangement it would gain in interest, while the interruption it now forms to the natural progress of thought in the life of our Lord would be thereby avoided. The subject of mere distribution may be deemed a trifling matter; but the more valuable the paintings the more worthy are they of being perfectly arranged.

THE ELECTION OF GRACE. By the Rev. W. TAYLOR. *Hodder & Stoughton.*

We have read this volume with pleasure. Although not

agreeing with all that is advanced in it, we cannot but admire the author's earnestness and rugged power. He brings always strong common sense to bear upon the subtle questions of theology he has undertaken to discuss. An extract from the writer's short but characteristic preface will give the reader a good idea of the nature of the book. "Read the first chapter, and ponder the high origin, relationships, and end of thy being. Read the second chapter, and contemplate God's 'eternal purpose' concerning thee and His provisions of mercy for thee. Read on, and see the way out of a labyrinth of human speculations, and find *the key* to unlock the meaning of all the Scripture terms pertaining to election." Mr. Taylor is well known to many of our readers by previous works, "The Model Preacher," etc.

FIFTY-NINE PLAIN PRACTICAL SERMONS. By Rev. EDW. GRIFFIN, D.D. *Richard D. Dickinson.*

This volume is correctly described in the title. The sermons are plain and practical, full of direct appeal and solemn warning. In thought they may be considered by some commonplace; but as examples of powerful, awakening, and persuasive sermons, few published discourses equal them.

THE BIBLE CLASS BOOK. By CHARLES BAKER. Second Edition. *Wertheim, Macintosh & Hunt.*

TOPICS FOR TEACHERS. By J. C. GRAY. Part I. *Elliot Stock.*

The first of these books has long been known to the young Bible student. The present edition has the advantage of many improvements and additional embellishments, and now forms in itself a little cyclopædia of the Bible. The second is the first part of a new attempt to help the teacher in his work. The conception is good, and well executed. The part before us treats of the animals of the Bible, and furnishes in an able manner both scholarly information and practical lessons.

SURE OF HEAVEN. A Book for the Doubting and Anxious. By THOMAS MILLS. *Elliot Stock.*

This is a very earnest and useful little book. It is simple in style and elementary in subject matter, and well suited to

guide the inquirer into the way of peace. It may with confidence be put into the hands of the doubting and anxious.

LIFE AND DEATH, AS TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE. *Elliot Stock.*

CAN IT BE TRUE? By WILLIAM MIALL. *Elliot Stock.*

These are two earnest protests against what may still be termed the prevailing opinions respecting future punishments. They differ much in style and character, but both seek to prove that the eternity of future punishments has no support from Scripture. The first, which is anonymous, is unusually lively in style. Seldom is the attempt made to preserve in print to the same extent the colloquial form of address. The number of interrogations gives it quite a sensational appearance. Some of the doctrines advanced in it are even more startling than the style. The second pamphlet is more calm in manner, but not the less earnest on that account. On the question of future punishment we express no judgment. Every reader must form his own opinion, after careful study of the Scriptures, as the authors of the two little books above have undoubtedly done.

A FEW WORDS ON "LIFE AND DEATH." By A. D. *Elliot Stock.*

A thoughtful and able answer to the above noticed book, "Life and Death, as taught in Scripture."

COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT. By JAMES MORISON, D.D. Parts II., III. *Hamilton, Adams & Co.*

We observe the same ability, learning, and care, in these two parts of Dr. Morison's commentary, which we noticed in Part I. The commentary cannot but be useful to all students of the Bible.

THE INFLUENCE OF LITTLE THINGS. By H. WAGSTAFF.

A well thought out and interesting little book for the young, illustrating the influence of "little things" upon our Character, Usefulness, Happiness, and Salvation.

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